

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 421 273

PS 026 770

AUTHOR Blackfelner, Carol; Ranallo, Barbara
TITLE Raising Academic Achievement through Parent Involvement.
PUB DATE 1998-05-00
NOTE 171p.; Action Research Project, Saint Xavier University and Skylight Training and Publishing Field-Based Masters Program.
PUB TYPE Dissertations/Theses (040) -- Reports - Evaluative (142) -- Tests/Questionnaires (160)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC07 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Academic Achievement; Grade 2; Homework; Parent Attitudes; Parent Conferences; Parent Influence; *Parent Participation; Parent Role; *Parent School Relationship; Parent Student Relationship; Parent Teacher Cooperation; Primary Education; Program Effectiveness; Student Attitudes; Student Improvement

ABSTRACT

Research has demonstrated that parent involvement has many beneficial effects for students. This action research project designed and implemented a program to raise the academic achievement of second-grade students by increasing parent involvement. The students attended two second-grade classrooms in a west-central Illinois school. The problem of low academic achievement in the classrooms was studied using anecdotal records, teacher observations, test scores, and records of homework completion. Analysis of the data indicated that many factors influenced parent involvement, including: (1) parents' fear of school; (2) parents' lack of time; (3) parents' lack of transportation; and (4) parents' embarrassment about their own educational level. To increase parent involvement, a number of activities were developed, including: (1) daily use of a reflective journal by students; (2) homework activities designed to check student and parent responsibility; (3) use of the school district's homework hotline phone system; (4) parent/child activity time at school, which was designed to acquaint parents with ways to help their children be more successful in school; (5) a newsletter; and (6) parent-teacher conferences. Surveys distributed at the end of the project indicated a positive change in parents' attitude toward communication between home and school, and that those who had volunteered felt good about the experience. Students' scores on the posttest surveys showed a small improvement. (Sixteen appendices include parent and student surveys, homework activities, and parent invitations to school activities. Contains 24 references.) (LPP)

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RAISING ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT THROUGH PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Carol Blackfelner
Barbara Ranallo

An Action Research Project Submitted to the Graduate Faculty
of the School of Education in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in
Teaching and Leadership

Saint Xavier University and Skylight Training & Publishing
Field-Based Masters Program

Peoria, Illinois

May 1998

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Advisor

Advisor

James B. O'Donoghue MEd
Advisor

Advisor

Beverly H. Cline, Ph.D.
Dean, School of Education

Dean, School of Education

ABSTRACT

This report describes a program for raising academic achievement using parent involvement. The targeted population consisted of second grade students in a low income and middle class community, located in west central Illinois. The problem, low academic achievement due to lack of parent involvement, was documented through anecdotal records, teacher observation, low test scores, and records of homework completion.

Analysis of probable cause data indicated that many factors influenced parent involvement which affected academic achievement. These included parents' fear of schools, not enough time, not knowing how to get involved, lack of transportation, and embarrassment about educational level. The focus of this report was an effort to engage parents in their students' education.

A review of solution strategies suggested by knowledgeable others, combined with an analysis of the problem setting, resulted in the development of parent/child activities which would raise academic achievement and increase the comfort level of parents in the school.

Post intervention data indicated an increase in student academic achievement through the use of parent involvement.

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CHAPTER 1

PROBLEM STATEMENT AND CONTEXT

General Statement of the Problem

Students in the targeted classrooms show low academic achievement without parent involvement. Evidence of low achievement is shown through anecdotal records, teacher observation, low test scores, and the fact that homework is not completed. It is the focus of this paper to follow the implementation of techniques to increase parent involvement and to raise academic achievement or document that effort.

Immediate Problem Context

This study will be conducted in a prekindergarten through fourth grade school located in a rural setting which serves the western and southwestern part of town with a total enrollment of 400 students. Enrollments are as follows: 96.6% White, 2.7% Black, 0.3% Hispanic, and 0.5% Asian-Pacific Islander. The low income students, 57%, are from families receiving public aid and/or are eligible to receive free lunches. The attendance rate is 95.7%, student mobility is 16.7%, and chronic truancy is 1.1% (Illinois School Report Card, 1996).

A staff of 26 teachers is employed with a gender breakdown of 92.3% female and 7.7% male with 100% White ethnicity. The average

years of teaching experience are 15.5 with 46.1% teachers holding a masters degree. The pupil-teacher ratio is 19.7:1. The average teacher's salary is \$38,210. The school has one female administrator.

The support staff consists of two secretaries, one library clerk, six reading aides, three early childhood aides, three custodians, and six kitchen and lunch employees. The Parent Teacher Association has declined drastically in enrollment over the last ten years. The parent support group is no longer affiliated with PTA and is now called Friends of the School. The attendance at meetings is comprised of 75% teachers and 25% parents (Illinois State School Report Card, 1996).

There are three sections of kindergarten through fourth grade with two sections of early childhood. Special services provided by the school are speech, resource, Title I, music, physical education, and art. Starting with the 1997-98 school year, this site will be designated as a schoolwide Title I school. Before any implementation of a schoolwide plan, the teachers from the school spent the 1996-97 school year planning for the schoolwide changes. After studying research, visiting existing schoolwide programs, and conducting needs assessments, the schoolwide committee identified four goals for improvement. The four goals are to reform reading instruction, to increase parent participation, to implement before and after school programs, and to create an academic atmosphere in the building. This plan was presented to and approved by the Board of Education on June 16, 1997.

The school has several special programs. Students have a 50 minute art class each week. In the spring there is a school art display open to the public. Two music classes a week help students prepare for a concert to exhibit instrumental and singing skills. A five week summer program at no charge featuring hands-on science, technology, and fun learning is offered to all kindergarten through fourth grade students. The Illini Spin and the Museum in the Classroom Grants added a new dimension for the students. The Illini Spin Grant involved a cross grade engaged learning project, connectivity to the internet, and new technology equipment. The Museum in the Classroom Grant was comprised of new technology equipment, many hours of teacher training, creating an engaged learning project in conjunction with the matching museum, and producing a web page to go with the project.

District

This is a unit school district with three elementary buildings, one middle school, one high school, and one special needs school. The district has a superintendent, an assistant superintendent of finances, a curriculum director, five principals, and two assistant principals. The average administrative salary is \$58,836. Operating expenditure per pupil is \$4,284. District services include a school psychologist, social workers, and a behavior disorder coordinator (Illinois State School Report Card, 1996).

The Surrounding Community

The city is the largest in the county and serves as the commercial and trading center of a 10 to 15 mile area. A 1990 census figure shows a population of 13,951 down 701 from 1980.

The community has a two year college which operates three miles southwest of the town, a school of cosmetology, and a school of nursing. The economy is basically comprised of service-related employers which is the result of a major trend away from industry. The two major employers are the hospital and the correctional center. The average household income is \$26,513 (School Improvement Plan, 1995).

Positive features include churches, parks, and a public library. There are 24 organized churches offering citizens their choice of denomination. The park district includes different types of recreational opportunities: trails for biking, hiking, walking, jogging, lakes for fishing, a driving range, and numerous baseball diamonds. Also included in the park district is a small municipal airport. The public library has grown in size and materials. One of the services is a children's librarian who works with the districts' elementary teachers. The parks and public library are funded by local taxes and endowments left by several private, wealthy citizens.

National Context of the Problem

The National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education (NCPPIE) defines parent involvement as the support and participation of parents at the school as well as at home which directly affects their child's educational progress. When parents become partners in education, not only do the children do better, but the schools improve as well. Epstein and Henderson (as cited in Barclay and Boone, 1996) found that children whose parents are active in their education have better test scores, grades, long-

term academic achievement, behavior, and attitudes than those with uninvolved parents.

Research shows that the involvement of the parents in their children's school learning experiences can increase academic achievement especially with low-income families. Clark's study (as cited in Berliner and Casanova, 1996) also found that school contacts with the parents of low-achieving pupils were often made for behavior or attendance problems not to foster academic growth. In 1996 Aronson reported that some parents lack the educational background or skills they feel they need to communicate with teachers and staff. Others had had negative experiences as students which make them uncomfortable going into the school. Most parents are willing to be involved but do not know how or who to contact. "The message is that most parents *do* care, *do* want to help, but sometimes don't know *how* to be of assistance. Even better news is that most parents *will* follow the advice the teachers give them" (Berliner and Casanova, 1996, p. 183).

Epstein's study (as cited in Berliner and Casanova, 1996) found that parents involved with the school felt a greater obligation to help their children at home. Parents that became involved had better feelings about their parental role. Another positive outcome of her study was that student achievement in reading showed more gains than those whose parents were not involved.

The research overwhelmingly demonstrates that parent participation in children's learning is positively linked to achievement. The research also shows that the more actively parents are involved in their children's learning, the greater

the achievement benefits. Examples of active participation are attending and supporting school activities, helping out in the classrooms, working on homework assignments, reading to their children, and going on field trips. The most successful parent participation programs start early in a child's educational process and offer a variety of ways parents can participate (Cotton and Wikelund, 1989; U.S. Department of Education, 1994).

According to Aronson (1996), a five-step strategy has been developed to bring schools and parents together as follows:

1. Reach a shared understanding of what form parent involvement will take.
2. Develop strategies for involving more parents.
3. Provide parents information on the school and ways of getting involved.
4. Involve those parents who are hardest to reach.
5. Reach out to parents who are reluctant to participate in the school (p. 59-60).

CHAPTER 2

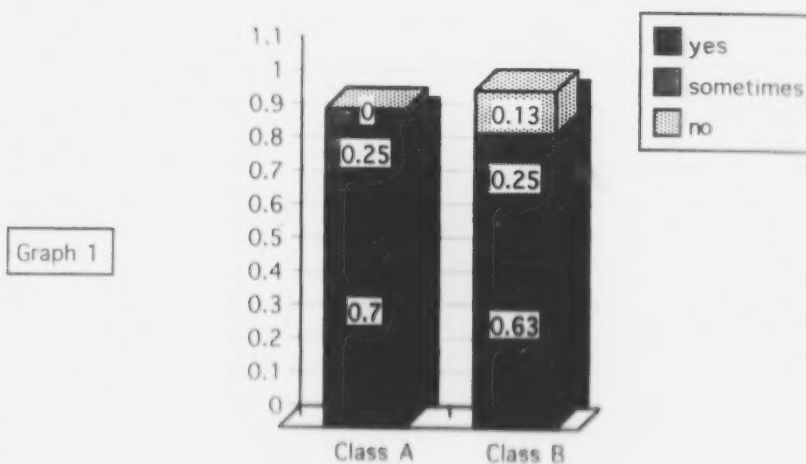
PROBLEM DOCUMENTATION

Problem Evidence

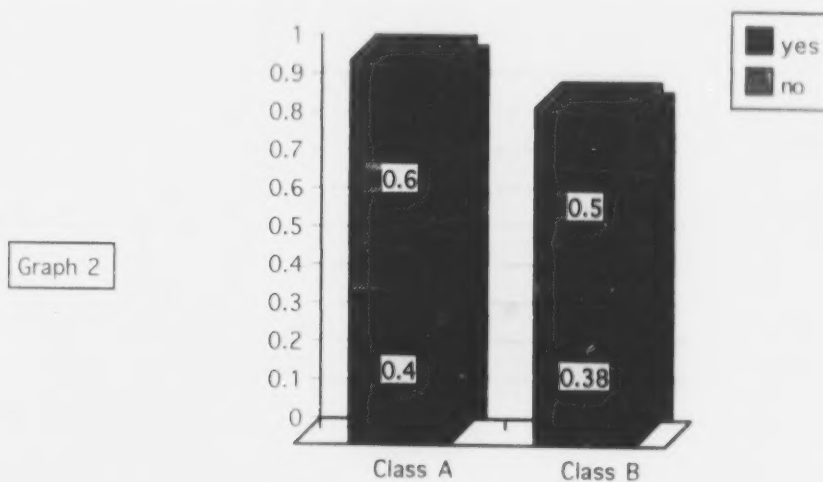
The evidence to document the low academic achievement due to the lack of parent involvement was gathered through parent surveys (Appendix A), student surveys (Appendix B), test scores (Appendix C), and anecdotal records.

In the pre-project parent survey it was noted that 70% of the parents in Class A and 63% of the parents in Class B believe that there is adequate communication between school and home (Graph 1). When parents were asked to be a school volunteer, 40% of Class A's parents and 38% of Class B's parents expressed an interest in volunteering (Graph 2). Sixty percent of Class A and 69% of Class B parents would be interested in attending a parent-child activity evening at school (Graph 3). When asked if their child reads for pleasure at home, 65% of Class A and 75% of Class B parents answered in the positive (Graph 4). Ninety percent of Class A's parents and 75% of Class B's parents do set aside some time each day to talk with their child about school (Graph 5). When parents were asked if they discuss television programs that they watch with their child, 55% of Class A's parents and 56% of Class B's parents replied favorably (Graph 6). Class A parents returned 87% of the survey, and Class B parents returned 68% of the survey.

The percentages given are based on the number of surveys returned for each class.

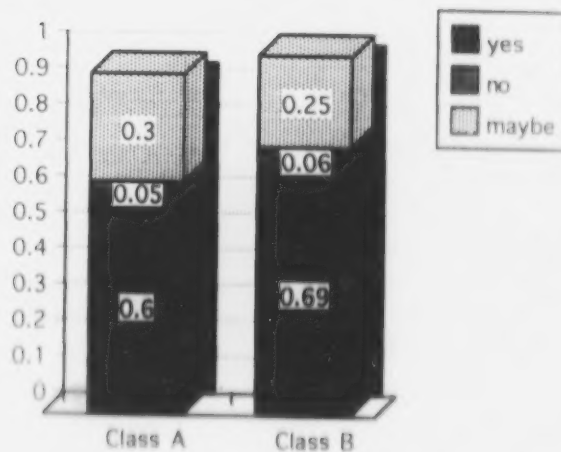


Graph 1 Do you feel there is adequate communication between school and home?



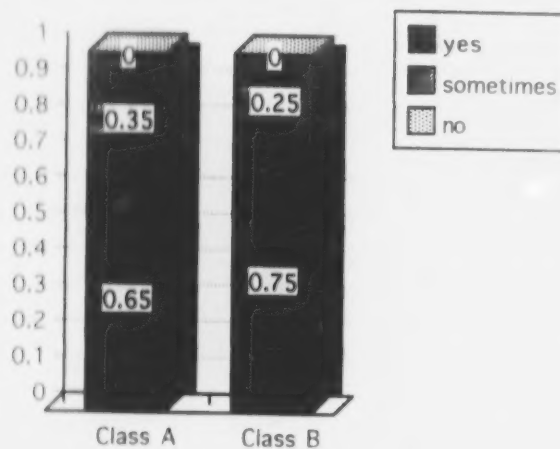
Graph 2 Would you be interested in being a school volunteer?

Graph 3



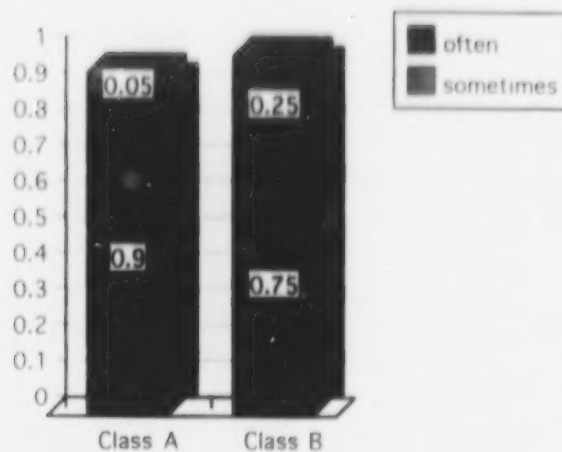
Graph 3 Would you be interested in attending a parent/child activity evening at school?

Graph 4



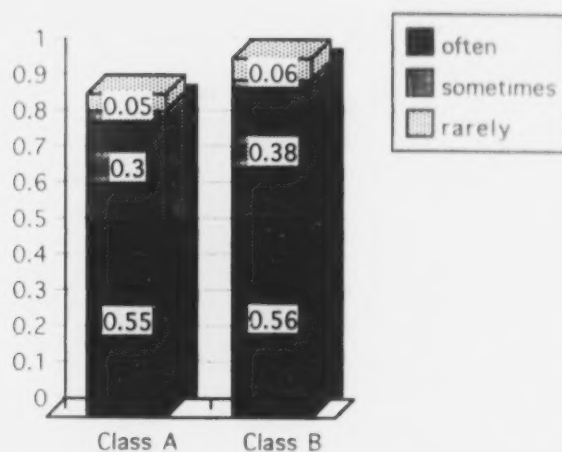
Graph 4 Does your child read for pleasure at home?

Graph 5



Graph 5 Do you set aside some time each day to talk with your child about school?

Graph 6



Graph 6 Do you discuss television programs that you and your child watch?

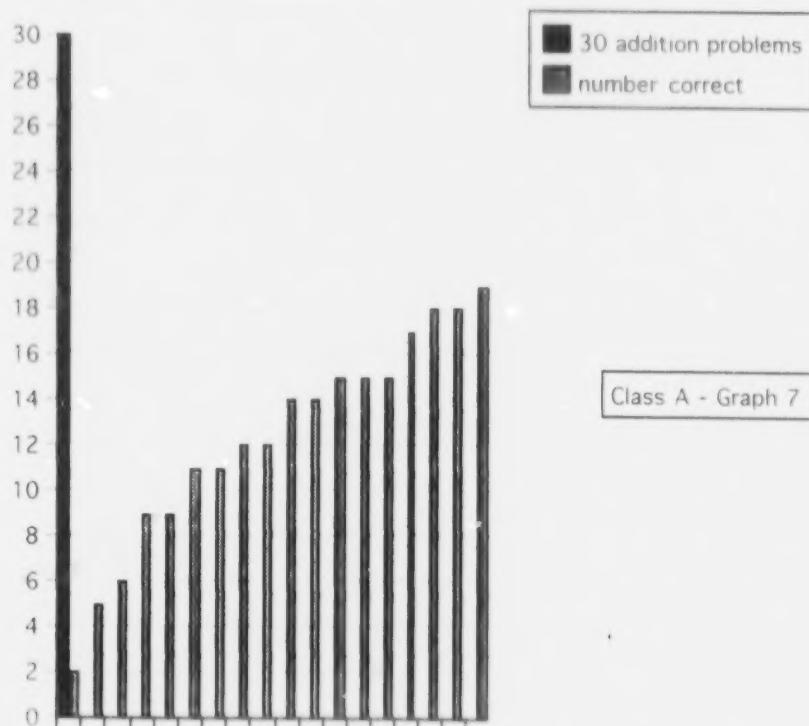
The students in Class A and Class B were asked to mark an answer to eight statements on the pre-project student survey. The survey was filled out during classtime with the teacher reading the statements. The survey answer choices were depicted as a "happy face" for yes, a "straight line face" for sometimes, and a "sad face" for no. The following table shows the results of this survey (Table 1).

Table 1

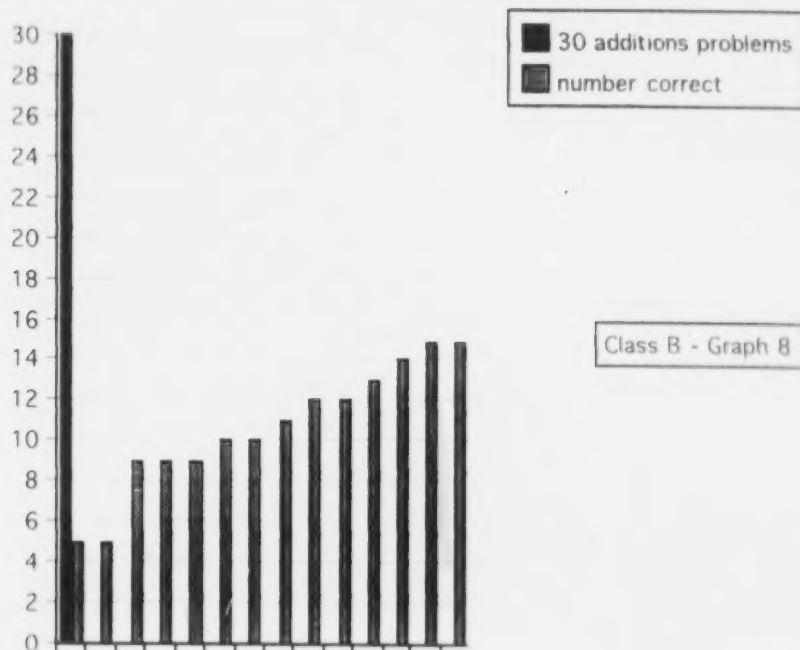
	Class A			Class B		
	yes	? no		yes	? no	
I like school.	74%	26%	0%	76%	23%	0%
I can do my homework by myself.	35%	61%	0%	55%	36%	9%
I need help to do my homework.	43%	30%	26%	55%	32%	14%
Someone at home helps me with my homework.	61%	35%	4%	45%	27%	27%
I watch TV a lot.	74%	22%	0%	91%	5%	5%
I play video games a lot.	30%	48%	22%	45%	27%	27%
My parents tell me when I can watch TV.	30%	26%	43%	32%	14%	55%
My parents want me to do well in school.	96%	4%	0%	91%	5%	5%

According to the Level One Stanford Achievement tests given in the Spring of 1997, Class A's complete battery ranged from 1.1 to 3.5 with an average of 2.08. Class B's complete battery ranged from 1.2 to 3.6 with an average of 2.24. The following data show results gathered from tests given in the fall of 1997. There is a distinct discrimination between the results of the tests.

For the purpose of gathering baseline data on the students' knowledge of their addition facts, Class A and Class B were both given a 30 problem Mad Minute test. Each bar represents the raw score based on the number of correct responses out of 30 addition problems as based on the targeted population. A Mad Minute is a timed test of one minute to test for memory recall. The results of the Mad Minute tests are displayed in the following graphs (Graph 7 and Graph 8).



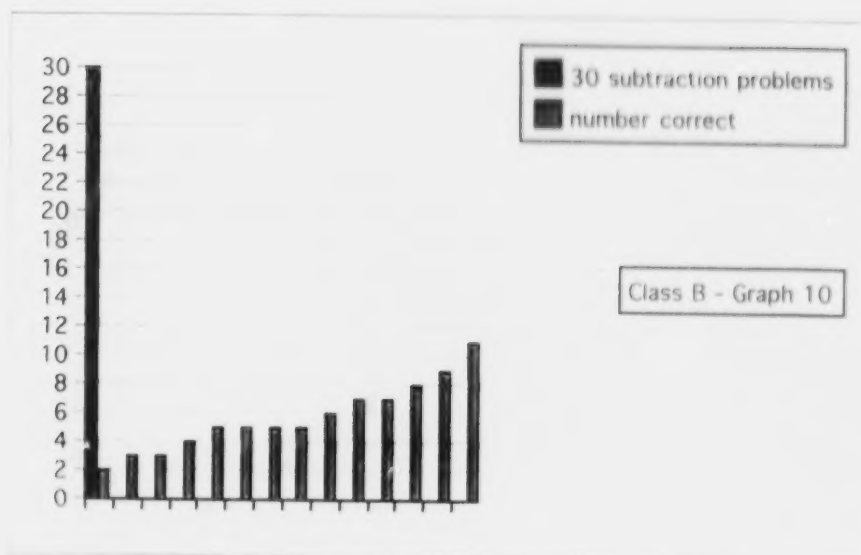
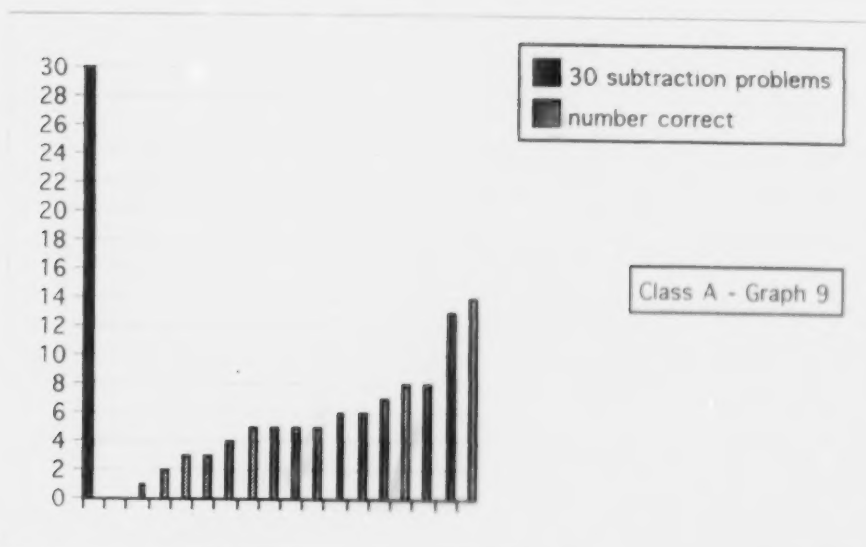
Graph 7 Baseline Addition Mad Minute Test



Graph 8 Baseline Addition Mad Minute Test

These graphs indicate the students are in need of practice on their addition facts mastery. The raw scores ranged from 2 to 19 correct answers out of 30.

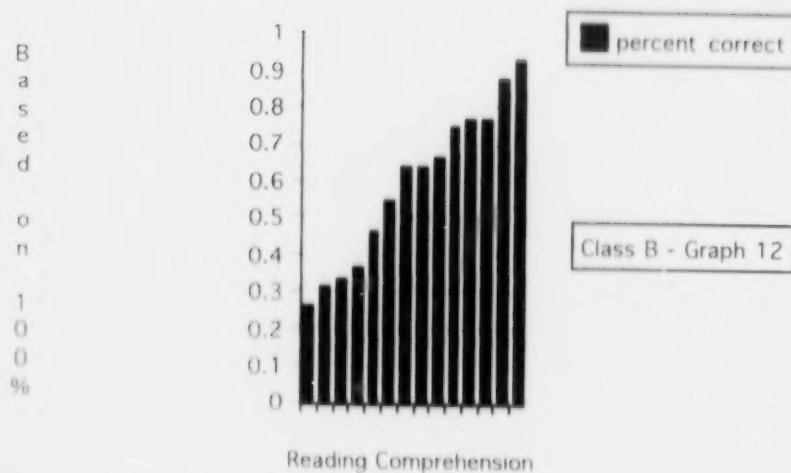
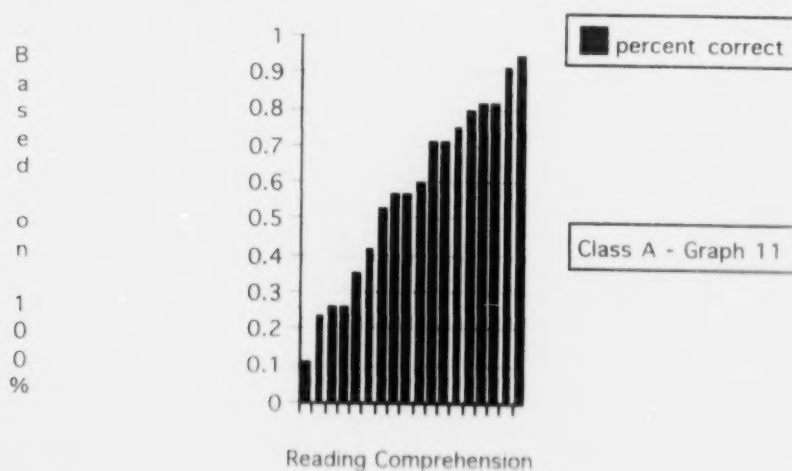
For the purpose of gathering baseline data on the students' knowledge of their subtraction facts, Class A and Class B were both given a 30 problem Mad Minute test. Each bar represents the raw score based on the number of correct responses out of 30 subtraction problems as based on the targeted population. The results of the Mad Minute tests are displayed in the following graphs (Graph 9 and Graph 10).



Graph 9 and Graph 10 Baseline Subtraction Mad Minute Test

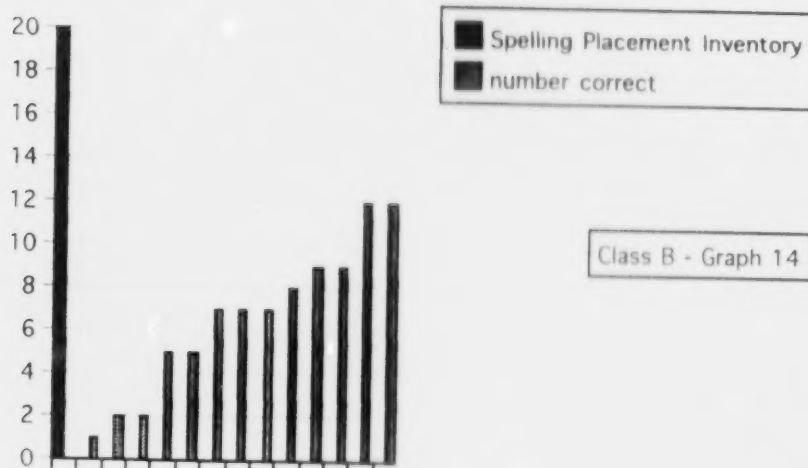
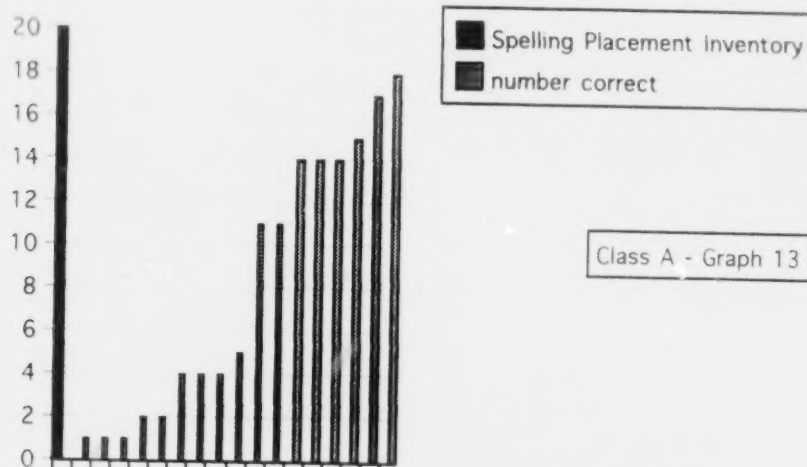
These graphs indicate the students are in need of practice on their subtraction facts mastery. The raw scores ranged from 0 to 14 correct out of 30.

For the purpose of gathering baseline data on the student's reading comprehension, Class A and Class B were both given a 45 question comprehension test. The comprehension test was composed of nine short stories and five questions followed each story. The students were given 35 minutes to complete the test. The results of the comprehension test are displayed in the following graphs (Graph 11 and Graph 12).



Graph 11 and Graph 12 Baseline Reading Comprehension Test

For the purpose of gathering baseline data on the student's spelling, Class A and Class B were both given a 20 word Spelling Placement Inventory. The results of the spelling inventory are displayed in the following graphs (Graph 13 and Graph 14).



Graph 13 and Graph 14 Baseline Spelling Placement Inventory

The following anecdotal records were logged from the collection of parent involvement activities during the August and September baseline period. August 14, 1997 was the day for parents to register their child in school. Ninety-one percent of Class A parents and 72% of Class B parents registered on the designated day. The pre-project parent survey and the consent to participate in a research study were mailed to parents on August 20, 1997 to be returned on the first day of school. Class A parents returned 87% of the parent surveys and 78% of the consent forms. Class B parents returned 68% of both the survey and consent form. The parents were asked to evaluate their child's social skills using a checklist. Ninety-six percent of the social skills checklists were returned by Class A. Seventy-seven percent of the social skills checklists were returned by Class B. On September 17, 1997 a schoolwide open house was held. Class A had 78% attendance, and Class B had 64%. These figures gave an indication of parent's interest in becoming involved with their child's education.

To accommodate the parents' schedules, two parent/child activity sessions were offered. The dates and times were September 25, 1997 from 6:00 to 7:30 or September 30, 1997 from 4:00 to 5:30. An invitation was sent to each family. The options were as follows: "I will attend on Thursday, September 25, 6:00 to 7:30, I will attend on Tuesday, September 30, 4:00 to 5:30, or I will not be able to attend". If an invitation was not returned or marked "no", the school-parent coordinator made a second contact by phone or by mail (Table 2).

Table 2

	Class A	Class B
Parents that returned invitation marked "yes"	74%	68%
Parents that returned invitation marked "no"	22%	5%
Parents that didn't respond	4%	27%

Percent of parents that were recontacted	22%	27%
Percent of parents that were recontacted and came	80%	67%

Percent of parents that said "yes" but didn't attend	9%	18%
Percent of parents that attended	87%	64%

Of the 55 families invited, 34 of them or 62%, attended the parent/child activity night. Why did the other 38% choose not to get involved?

Probable Causes

According to Christopher T. Cross, Assistant Secretary of Education for Research and Improvement:

We can no longer afford to have parents disengaged from the education of their children. We cannot expect others to perform those duties, and we cannot expect children to do well without the guidance, the tutoring, the nurturing, and the commitment of parents. To do less is to consign our

nation to an ever-accelerating decline into economic and educational oblivion (Loucks & Waggoner, 1993, p. 62).

Educational research has demonstrated that parent involvement is one of the real keys to children's success in school. There are many different levels and types of parent involvement, and all are important. Parents that find it difficult to come to school can be active partners with the school by assisting their child at home. In fact, home based parent involvement appears to be the most valuable tool to improve student achievement. The help from home may also affect attendance and behavior. In today's world, parent involvement often means family involvement including grandparents, aunts, uncles, and even family friends (Fowler & Corley, 1996; Kunin et al., 1996).

Parent involvement is a process, not an event and does not happen overnight. Seven characteristics of a positive parent involvement program are as follows: written policies, administrative support, training staff and parents, partnership approach, two-way communication, networking, and evaluation of the program (Williams & Chavkin, 1989). After parents get involved with their child's education and see positive achievements, they realize what an important contribution their help can make. Parent involvement is an underutilized resource to increase student achievement (Loucks and Waggoner, 1993).

Lack of parent involvement is a serious problem facing our schools today. Many parents are considered "hard-to-reach". According to Olmsted (as cited by Loucks & Waggoner, 1993), "'Hard-to-reach' families are those who have not initiated contact with the school and who have not responded to three invitations

from the school to work together with them on the child's education" (p. 44). These parents often face barriers that need to be overcome with help from the school.

Greenwood and Hickman (1991), Rich (1996), and Loucks and Waggoner (1993) gave examples of probable causes for low academic achievement due to lack of parent involvement. Of the examples, we chose eight areas which are common to the parents of our school: lack of transportation, lack of time, parents lack the knowledge of how to get involved, parents' embarrassment about their educational level, low-income parents view schools as institutionalized authority, parents distrust or fear schools from their past experiences, parents with personal problems, and barriers put up by schools.

Lack of Transportation

A key factor in involving parents is getting them into the school. Transportation problems cause some families to be unable to attend school functions. They may not have reliable personal transportation or access to public transportation. Some ideas to help with lack of transportation are car pooling, home visits, or holding the school meetings in the neighborhood location such as a church or public library.

Lack of Time

An excuse that many families give for not getting involved is that they don't have time. It is true that families are busier now than in the past. For some, just putting food on the table is a pressing problem. For these families, the school needs to be flexible in scheduling meetings and using alternate forms of communication so the families will be informed. The fact of the

matter is many parents don't make family involvement in their child's education a top priority.

Parents sometimes need help in learning the skill of doing more than one thing at a time. Examples of this are doing the dishes and discussing a story, or driving and doing oral drill activities. Teaching parents how to balance their time to promote learning and communication with their children is an important skill that needs to be developed.

Parents Lack the Knowledge of How to Get Involved

According to Lontos (1991), parents really do care about their child's education but may not know how to help. Children who are unable to meet school expectations are sometimes actually underdeveloped in their school readiness because parents do not know how to work with them. Providing information and assistance in home-learning activities to all parents regardless of family background and education has shown favorable results (Barclay and Boone, 1996). It is important that the training schedule to assist parents in helping their children be flexible. These sessions need to offer a wide range of activities which accommodate different preferences and capabilities. The goal would be to make the parents feel comfortable and competent in aiding their child. "While research indicates that training activities are beneficial, those researchers who have looked at the extent of the training have found that a little is better than a lot" (Cotton & Wikelund, 1989, p. 3). What parents do to participate in their children's education matters more to their child's performance than parent income or education and also affects the student's attitude and social behavior.

Parents' Embarrassment about their Educational Level

According to the National Assessment of Title I: Interim Report (1996), participation in their children's education is lower among parents who do not have literacy skills or high school diplomas than parents who do. Parents don't always have the information or attitudes needed to make helping their children a reality. "Many of the parents were intelligent but undereducated, living on the margin or outside the mainstream of society." (Comer, 1991, p. 184-185).

Parents and teachers are concerned about the parents' ability to participate in at-home-learning activities. Parents feel they could help more if they had more education. Teachers who involve parents more in home-learning activities positively affect the parents' knowledge about school no matter what educational level the parents have achieved (Barclay & Boone, 1996). Parents who have become involved with teachers in home-learning activities are more able to overcome their embarrassment.

Low-income Parents See Schools as Institutionalized Authority

According to Comer (1991), parents often view teachers as "distant, rejecting and even hostile" towards their children and themselves. These parents usually feel inadequate in a school setting, and feel that they are not qualified to have a say in schooling. They are uneasy if their cultural style or socio-economic level differs from the teachers (Brown, 1989). Many low-income parents feel they should leave the educating of the children to the professionals.

Children from low-income families have the most to gain when schools involve parents. Establishing a parent program that

focuses on making the school a good place for students and parents is of prime importance. Parents and staff need to work first at neutral tasks so they can get to know one another and "eventually view themselves as participants in a collaborative enterprise rather than as actors in a competitive power play" (Drake, 1995, p. 314). Emphasizing the parent's strengths, providing refreshments, and using a parent buddy system to give parents a support network will be beneficial in reaching low-income families. It is up to the school to market the importance of family involvement in education.

Parents Distrust or Fear Schools from Their Past Experiences

"Although these events would have taken place many years earlier, to some parents the events may seem as if they happened only yesterday. Just walking through the door at the school elicits negative images and feelings of frustration" (Barclay and Boone, 1996, p. 34-35). Parents of low-achieving students often were low-achievers, and school was a painful experience. Attending a school meeting may bring back unpleasant memories of punishment and rejection which make the school and its staff intimidating. Parents sometimes fear they will be blamed for their child's problems. These parents will not be confident or enthusiastic during a school visit. According to McGee (1996), "All the freebies in the world could not coax them to return to an environment where they felt unsuccessful." (p. 32)

An inviting school atmosphere is very important, and parents must feel they belong in the school (Family Involvement Partnership for Learning, 1997). Ways to make parents feel welcome are as follows: make sure they know where the office and

their child's classroom is located, show a personal touch by asking their opinions and talking to them in words they understand, and learn their interests and abilities. Once parents are involved they develop positive attitudes about themselves, and it increases their self-confidence. The key factor is making parents feel comfortable and a part of the team in their child's education. The focus needs to be on "we, we, we" rather than "I, I, I".

Parents with Personal Problems

Personal problems may include split families, drug use, mental illness, alcoholism, and homelessness. Parents with severe personal problems are dealing with just daily survival. Disintegration of the traditional family has resulted in many children lacking the social and emotional development to be successful at school. A way of helping parents with personal problems is to direct them to a service that can provide help for their specific needs. The school must develop programs that address social issues and encourage these parents to become involved. "Without parental support for school staff and programs, very few children who sense any degree of rejection or being outside the mainstream of society will pull away from the attitudes, values, and ways that could lead to sustained school and related life success" (Comer, 1991, p. 186).

Barriers Put Up by Schools

Contributing to the success of a parent participation program is a positive teacher attitude. Consciously or unconsciously school staff put up barriers to parents. One example of a barrier is that teachers have not been trained to effectively involve

parents. Due to the fact that most teachers have not had any undergraduate training in parent involvement, staff development programs must meet this need. Teachers who do not want to give up control is another barrier that must be addressed. Daniels states that some teachers are scared of parent participation and view it as a clash, not a partnership (1996). Furthermore, parent involvement requires additional time and organization in an already crowded schedule. Teachers need extra support and resources to be able to devote time and energy to a family involvement program.

This list is far from being complete, but these barriers were discussed at great length. For these barriers to be broken down, an effective parent involvement program must be a team effort. This team includes the teachers, administrators, and parents. Teachers cannot have the total burden placed upon them and be ensured of success. The outside community must also be willing to support the schools to ensure parent involvement, which will increase academic success.

CHAPTER 3
THE SOLUTION STRATEGY
Literature Review

George Gallup (as cited in Barclay & Boone, 1996) stated in his review of the findings of the 1981 Gallup Poll:

A careful examination of survey findings for the past ten-year period leads to this conclusion: Many of the problems of the schools can be solved only if parents become more involved than they presently are in the educational process. Parents must, in fact, be regarded as part of the teaching team. A joint effort by parents and teachers is essential to deal more successfully with problems of discipline, motivation, and the development of good work habits at home and in school. (p. 1)

Even though this poll is sixteen years old, a strong consensus still remains on the importance of parent involvement. A 1993 Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll found that 96% of the public felt that parents taking an active roll in educating their children is very important (Barclay and Boone, 1996).

According to the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (1993), every family functions as a home learning environment no matter what its structure, financial level, or

ethnic background. Thus, every family has the potential to support and improve their children's academic achievement. What parents do at home with their children affects their child's total education. Schools need to let parents know how important both their at school and at home contributions are. A parent/school partnership to promote children's academic achievement is a must. In 1992 Flaxman and Inger reported that even though there are a number of different types of parent involvement programs, a few general principles cover all of them:

1. Parent involvement works best when it is well planned and comprehensive.
2. Parent involvement needs to be preventive and developmental as opposed to remedial.
3. The advantages of parent involvement are not limited to early childhood or grade school.
4. In order to help, parents do not have to be well-educated.
5. When schools involve parents, low-income and minority children profit the most.

A school-parent compact is one way to provide the opportunity for developing strong school-family partnerships. There is no set formula for a school-parent compact, but it is a written agreement that needs to address the following points:

1. Describe the school's responsibility to provide excellent curriculum and instruction to students;
2. Describe parent's responsibility in supporting their child's learning, such as making sure homework is completed, child attends school, volunteers at school;

3. Speaks to the importance of establishing ongoing communication between teachers and parents, such as conferences, frequent progress reports, and opportunities for parents to volunteer, observe and participate in classroom activities (Policy Guidance for Title I, 1996).

In 1996 Aronson reported that the more involved parents became, the greater their satisfaction and confidence in the school. They also were more supportive of the teachers and administrators when they became more familiar with the instructional and curricular goals. Phi Delta Kappa held twenty-eight forums across the country from October, 1996 until February, 1997. In 1997 Rose and Rapp reported that "one suggestion common across all forums was the need to provide even more opportunities for parent involvement." (p. 767) Some of Schroder's suggestions for involving parents are as follows: show parents the processes involved in learning, not just the products; help parents understand the curriculum by holding workshops; send home a newsletter regularly; invite parents to participate in class activities; send home hands-on science and/or math activities with a description of the project's skills, concepts, and goals; explain all parts of the writing process; plan a workshop to help parents learn to read aloud; explain the importance of making predictions and asking questions when reading; invite parents to go along on a school walk; and introduce parents to cooperative groups and let them know how they are structured and what the benefits are (1997).

If the school staff is willing to dedicate their time and effort in a parent involvement program, positive outcomes will be derived, according to Henderson (as cited by Drake, 1995). They

are as follows:

1. Students tend to do better academically.
2. Students are better behaved.
3. Parents feel more respected and are more satisfied; they are more cooperative with the school.
4. Parents are more willing to seek the school's help with their children.
5. Parents show more confidence in the teachers and administrators.
6. Parents make fewer complaints with respect to the school.

(p. 316)

In order for parents and their children to experience academic improvement, schools and families need to work together as a partnership. In 1997 Danzberger and Friedman reported that research indicates that there is no one best way to handle parent involvement. What seems to work best is for parents to be involved in many different roles over time. It is more important that parent involvement be well-planned, comprehensive, and long-lasting rather than one particular form. As long as parents are the main ingredient in the improvement strategy, students do better in school.

Project Objectives and Processes

Research indicates that today's students show lower academic achievement without parent involvement. In response to this information, the focus of this project is to increase students' academic achievement. This will be accomplished using various techniques involving parents.

During the period of September 1997 through January 1998, a group of second grade students will be targeted. As a result of

increased parental involvement, the students will increase their academic achievement as measured by anecdotal records, teacher observation, test scores, and completed homework assignments. In order to accomplish the project objective, the following processes will be necessary:

1. Eliciting information from first grade teachers about students' academics and their parents' school involvement.
2. Teacher materials and actions that foster parent involvement will be developed.
3. Creating materials and activities for student homework bags.

Project Action Plan

I. Before School Begins

- A. Mail letter to parents explaining project
- B. Mail parent survey to be returned by the child on
August 27, 1997

II. Week 1

- A. Talk to first grade teachers about the parent involvement and academic assessment of targeted students
- B. Look up and record students' Stanford Achievement scores from the previous year
- C. Check off returned parent survey on parent checklist
- D. Check off returned permission slips for the project on parent checklist
- E. Check off that student has brought in a spiral notebook on parent checklist
- F. Check off parents who have volunteered their time as noted on the parent survey

- G. Contact parents who have expressed an interest to help

III. Week 2

- A. Send home social skills checklist for parents to complete and return to school
- B. Check off returned social skills checklist on parent checklist
- C. Begin having students write daily in their reflective journals on what they did the evening before
- D. Record message for parents on homework hotline
- E. Send homework activities home - handwriting "a/d" and honesty activity
- F. Record homework returned on student academic checklist
- G. Send letter inviting parents to come with their child to parent/child activity time - dates September 25 or September 30, 1997
- H. Complete teachers' social skills checklist

IV. Week 3

- A. School open house (September 16, 1997)
- B. Check off parents who attended open house on parent checklist
- C. Students continue to write in daily reflective journals
- D. Send homework activities home - spelling words, handwriting "o/g", and social studies
- E. Record homework returned on student academic checklist
- F. Cooperative lesson on social skills
- G. Give second grade Spelling Placement Inventory
- H. Give addition facts to 18 Mad Minute test

V. Week 4

- A. Students continue to write in daily reflective journals

- B. Send homework activities home - spelling words
- C. Record homework returned on student academic checklist
- D. Parent/child activity night - Sept. 25, 6:00-7:30
- E. Cooperative lesson on social skills
- F. Contact parent volunteers to pop corn for parent/child activity night and iron drawings on homework bags
- G. Students complete student survey at school
- H. Record findings of student surveys
- I. Give subtraction facts from 18 Mad Minute test
- J. Give reading comprehension test for baseline

VI. Week 5

- A. Parent/child activity night - Sept. 30, 4:00-5:30
- B. Place weekly assignment sheet in homework bag to be signed off by parents
- C. Place math fact bags in homework bags to be practiced twice weekly
- D. Students write in their daily reflective journal
- E. Parent volunteers check off return of homework bags
- F. Cooperative lesson using social skills

VII. Weeks 6-18

- A. Send homework bag home daily with student
- B. Each week a new assignment sheet will be placed in the homework bag
- C. Parent volunteers check off return of homework bags
- D. Cooperative lessons using social skills
- E. Update homework hotline for parents to call
- F. Continue to practice math facts twice weekly
- G. Students write in their daily reflective journals

- H. Newsletters - generated by teachers and students and typed by parent volunteer (monthly)

VIII. Week 10

- A. Parent/teacher conferences - November 6-7, 1997
- B. Check off parents who attended conferences on parent checklist
- C. Hand invitations to parents for parent/child family night on December 8, 1997 - send invitation to those who do not attend

IX. Week 15

- A. Child/parent activity night - December 8, 1997
(computers and hands-on math)
- B. Check off parents that attended the activity night

X. Week 18

- A. Mail follow-up parent survey to be returned by the child
- B. Check off returned parent survey on parent checklist
- C. Students complete follow-up student survey
- D. Record findings of student survey

XI. Week 19

- A. Retest subtraction and addition Mad Minute, Spelling Placement Inventory, and reading comprehension
Methods of Assessment

In order to assess the effects of the interventions, the parents will participate in the follow-up parent survey (Appendix D), as well as the students' follow-up survey (Appendix E). The students will be retested with subtraction and addition "mad minute" tests, a reading comprehension test, and a spelling placement inventory (Appendix C). The information gathered from the surveys and testing results will be compared to pre-project

parent surveys and the students' baseline testing results to look for the changes in attitudes and academic growth. In addition, all anecdotal records will be carefully examined for a correlation between parent involvement and the students' academic achievement.

CHAPTER 4

PROJECTS RESULTS

Historical Description of the Intervention

The objective of this project was to raise student academic achievement. Working to increase parent involvement and using activities in the classroom, a variety of techniques to raise student academic achievement were implemented.

The targeted population consisted of two second grade classrooms in the same elementary school building. To set the stage for the upcoming school year, a survey and explanation letter (Appendix A) were sent prior to the start of school to be returned the first day via the student. The information gathered from the surveys was recorded by each teacher. Two pieces of information that were immediately useful to the project were how parents preferred to receive information from school and how many were willing to volunteer in different capacities.

Also mailed with the survey was a letter with a permission clause (Appendix F) which explained the project. The returned permission slips were recorded on the parent checklists. Student achievement scores from the previous year were recorded. A discussion pertaining to the targeted students was held with the first grade teachers.

A classroom activity that was used each morning throughout the intervention was a reflective journal. In this journal the

students were to write about two activities they had done the night before. The purpose of this activity was to check for academic choices being made at home. A variety of homework activities (Appendix G) were employed on a weekly basis to check student and parent responsibility. The completed homework was recorded on an academic checklist.

Another means of communication between home and school was the school district's homework hotline (Appendix H) phone system. A recorded message pertaining to all subject areas of the targeted population was updated on a regular basis. The parents could call the hotline 24 hours a day. A schoolwide open house was held early in the fall. Parents that attended were checked off on the parent checklist.

The kick off to the intervention was a parent/child activity time. Invitations (Appendix I) were sent three weeks prior to the event offering a choice of two dates and times. The choices were: following the school day, or an evening. The parents were asked to select the most convenient time for their schedule. Follow up notes were sent to parents who did not respond initially. Parents who failed to respond to the follow up notes or responded "no" received a phone call from our school-parent coordinator to encourage them to attend. Each parent received a reminder note (Appendix I) the night before their scheduled time.

The focus of the 90 minute parent/child activity time was to bring families together for a special time and to help make the parents aware of ways to help their child be more successful in school. Each arrival was given a green, yellow, or red square of construction paper which was later used to form groups. A brief welcome and introduction (Appendix J) to the evening was given to

the whole group. The following statement was made to the group, "you were your child's first teacher and continue to be an important teacher. Our goal, as your child's teacher this year, is for us to be partners with you in ensuring your child has the most successful learning experience possible."

The parents and their children rotated among three sessions. Each session emphasized one academic area, with a packet of materials included. Time was allowed for practice with each of these methods. One session gave examples of how to help improve spelling. Some techniques that were introduced were spelling words with yarn, writing words in a zip-lock bag filled with mustard, using magnetic letters on the refrigerator, and post-it note activities (Appendix K).

The rotation of sessions continued with a handwriting and math idea session. The handwriting demonstrated correct manuscript letter formation for an easier transition to cursive. The second part of this session dealt with a variety of ways to memorize basic addition and subtraction facts. Some techniques were to use magnetic numbers, playing cards, dice, dominoes, and flash cards. The parents and children were provided with a set of flash cards and zip-lock baggy for storage. Parents were asked to practice these facts with their child at least twice weekly with the goal being memorization.

The "homework connection" sheet (Appendix L) was introduced in the third session. This weekly sheet was a physical connection between home and school. The object of the "homework connection" sheet was a dual responsibility between the parent and child. The child was to share what was in his/her homework bag, and the parents were to monitor and sign-off on what was completed each

night, even if there was no homework. The other task for this group was to create a personalized homework bag. They were supplied with iron-on crayons and paper with which to create an original drawing. This drawing was then transferred onto a cloth book bag provided to them. Students that were not in attendance at the activity nights were allowed to decorate a bag in school. All handouts were sent home to parents who were unable to attend. After attending each session, the parents were asked to fill out an evaluation (Appendix M).

Parent volunteers were contacted to make the evening's refreshments and to iron the original drawings on to the book bags. Each Monday, volunteers recorded information from the "homework connection" sheets. This information was recorded on individual record sheets (Appendix L).

Also, a social skills checklist (Appendix N) was sent home for the parents to evaluate their child's social skills. These were returned to school by the students and checked off on the parent checklist. Each teacher was to complete the same social skills checklist on each student. The researchers deviated from the original plan at this time. This information was not relevant to the project objective, as a result, it was not completed.

Several cooperative lessons (Appendix O) on social skills were taught during the intervention period. The topics included fairness, respect, and honesty. To stress these skills teachers read literature to the children. These books included Bein' With You This Way, Angel Child, Dragon Child, Andy and the Lion, Sam, Bangs and Moonshine, and The Emperor's New Clothes. The purpose of these lessons was to make better listeners and citizens, which in turn make better learners.

Baseline data was gathered through four pretests (Appendix C). The academic areas covered were spelling, math, and reading comprehension. The spelling test was a second grade 20 word Spelling Placement Inventory. The reading test was a 45 question comprehension test, administered to determine the student's baseline in reading comprehension. The test consisted of nine short stories with questions. Students were given 35 minutes to complete the test. The math tests were addition and subtraction timed tests. Each version consisted of 20 math fact problems. The scores from each of these pretests were recorded for future use and comparison.

These four pretests were administered over a two week period. Also during this two week period the children were to fill out a student survey (Appendix B). This survey's purpose was to find out more about how they spent their time at home and how they feel about school. The findings were tallied for each classroom.

Another form of communication to parents was a newsletter (Appendix P). This circulation was created by students and teachers. A parent volunteer formatted and typed the communique. In the action plan it was stated that the newsletter would be published monthly. Due to time and the use of other forms of communications (homework hotline, open house, parent/child activity nights and parent/teacher conferences), the newsletter was sent home every other month.

Parent/teacher conferences are held annually after the first quarter. Two dates (evening and daytime) are designated in the district calendar. Parents are encouraged to sign up on the schedule during the fall open house. A concerted effort is made to meet with every child's parent. During this conference, each

parent received an invitation (Appendix I) for the upcoming parent/child family night which was to be held the next month. Invitations were mailed to those parents who could not attend a conference.

The second parent/child activity night was held on Tuesday, December 8, 1998. This evening was to be a "hands on" experience. The parents and children divided their time between two sessions. One session consisted of "hands on math", engaging the families in geoboards, tangrams, pattern blocks, and attribute block tasks. Handouts (Appendix K) with exercises that progressed from simple to difficult were used to enlighten the parents. The intent was to demonstrate problem solving techniques.

The second session introduced some of the school's computer capabilities. Thirty computers were set up with either the district's network or an assortment of CD ROM's to be previewed by the children and their parents. The function was to expose the tools available to reinforce classroom learning. Parents were given an evaluation (Appendix M) to assess and rank the evening's activities. All parents who attended were recorded on the parent checklist.

Nearing the end of the intervention, a parent follow-up survey (Appendix D) was mailed. These surveys were returned by the students and the information was tallied. A follow-up student survey (Appendix E) was administered and results were tallied.

The culmination of the intervention was the posttesting in addition facts, subtraction facts, spelling inventory, and reading comprehension (Appendix C). These tools were the same used in gathering baseline data. A comparison of the results looked for academic growth.

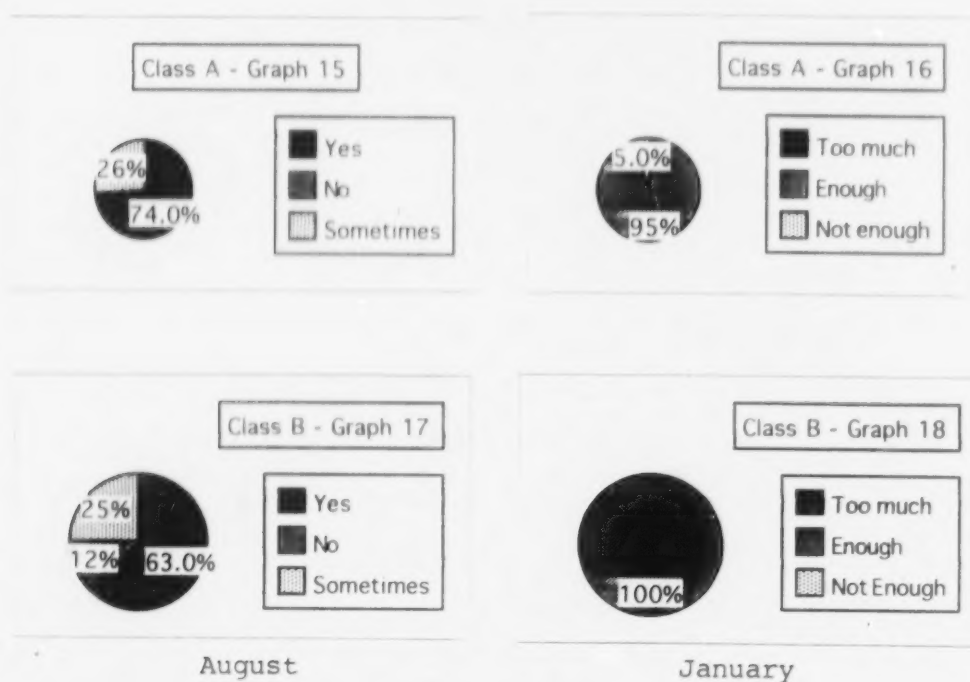
Presentation and Analysis of Results

The targeted population consisted of two second grade classrooms. Class A was comprised of 23 students of which 18 participated in the action plan, and Class B was comprised of 21 students of which 14 participated. Each class had one participating student who moved from the district before the completion of the intervention.

In order to assess the effects of parent involvement on academic achievement in Classes A and B the following information was gathered. The parents of Class A and Class B were asked to fill out a survey in August, before school began (Appendix A) and again in January (Appendix D). The purpose of the survey that was sent in August was to gauge the parents' interest in participating in school activities and to get a feel of the importance of school in the home. The results of this survey were given in chapter two. The January survey gave the parents an opportunity to share their views of the interventions from September through January. In the January survey question one asked for the parent's perception of his child's interest in school. Class A's findings were 40% felt there was more interest since the school year began and 60% felt that it had stayed the same. In Class B 25% felt there was more interest in school, 56% stated it had stayed the same, while 13% felt interest had declined. One parent from Class A, who marked that interest was the same as at the beginning of the school year, commented that her child had always been interested in school.

In both surveys the parents were asked if they felt home and school communication was adequate. Classes A and B showed a

positive change in the parents' attitude toward communications between home and school. In August 74% of Class A parents felt the communication was enough (Graph 15). In January the percentage increased to 95% (Graph 16). Class B had a larger increase from August to January of parents who felt communication was adequate. The percentage grew from 63% to 100% (Graphs 17 and 18).



Graphs 15-18 Do you feel there is adequate communication between school and home?

Question three requested that the parents access their volunteer experience if they had had the opportunity to volunteer at school. Class A had 55% and Class B had 38% of the parents volunteering in some capacity. All of these parents responded

that their volunteer experience had been positive. The August survey asked for volunteers, and they were recruited using that tool.

The next question asked the parents if they felt the homework bag was helpful. Sixty percent of Class A parents answered yes, thirty-five percent answered sometimes, and five percent answered no. In Class B 59% replied yes, 35% replied sometimes, and 6% replied no. Parents were asked to comment on what they liked about the bags. The following list was compiled from these comments:

- * making the bag with my child was fun
- * keeps all assignments and notes together
- * helps him to be responsible
- * felt ownership and pride because they designed the bag
- * showed interest in her homework and returning items on time
- * likes knowing what he is doing in school
- * spending time each night with my child helping her learn
- * helped her remember to fill it and return it
- * uses it to carry to and from school
- * uses it all the time
- * second graders tend to have problems misplacing things or forgetting something and the bag helps with this problem
- * brings attention to the homework and important notes because it kept them separate
- * has gotten me into the habit of always looking in the bag and talking about school and working on math and spelling almost every night

The following is a list of suggestions made by parents on ways to improve the use of the bag:

- * use a folder as the bag crumpled the papers
- * forgets to use the bag
- * he already has a bag
- * needs to be sturdier
- * let parents know not to buy a bag

In the last parallel question from the two surveys , Class A saw a small decrease in time set aside to discuss the school day between the August and January surveys. Class B saw an increase in the amount of time set aside. The results are displayed in the following table (Table 3).

Table 3

	Often	Sometimes
Do you set aside some time each day to talk with your child about school?		
Class A - August	95%	5%
Class A - January	84%	16%
Class B - August	75%	25%
Class B - January	82%	18%

Question six of the January survey asked parents if the amount of time that their child spent reading for pleasure had increased since the beginning of the school year. Seventy-four percent of Class A parents responded "yes", sixteen percent said "no", and ten percent were "not sure". Class B parents replied with 82% "yes", 12% "no", and 6% "not sure".

The remaining two questions of the January survey were directly related to the interventions and how the parents felt about them. These results were extremely positive. The parents' answer choices to these questions were: "yes", "no", and "sometimes". There were no negative reactions to these questions. The "yes" and "sometimes" responses are displayed in the table below (Table 4).

Table 4

Question	Class A		Class B	
	Yes	Sometimes	Yes	Sometimes
Do you feel that your involvement has helped your child grow academically?	89%	11%	88%	12%
Did you enjoy attending the parent/child activities at school?	79%	21%	76%	24%

At the conclusion of the January survey, parents' comments and suggestions concerning the intervention activities were solicited. The subsequent list was compiled of these comments and suggestions:

- * enjoyed the parent/child night that we attended - was both fun and academically worthwhile
- * are both very pleased with the extra time the teachers have put into organizing parent nights
- * very pleased with the school
- * very glad all the second grade teachers are working together to improve the children's skills at school
- * really enjoyed the special activities - thanks you for all the extra time and effort - it is appreciated

- * pleased with the improvements my child has made academically
- * think the parent/child activity nights were helpful to my child and me - good way of letting parents know exactly what is being taught - gives ideas on how to help with homework - makes the learning process a lot easier
- * would like to see more practice sheets come home - thank you for being such great teachers - caring and concerned teachers are very important to us
- * every parent should take advantage of helping their child grow academically

This favorable feedback indicates that parents also felt there was a need for better home/school involvement and communication.

Students were also surveyed at the beginning of the project (Appendix B) and again in January (Appendix E). The results of the August survey were presented in Chapter 2. Of the eight items on the two surveys, six are parallel and will be reviewed in table format (Tables 5 and 6).

Table 5

Class A	August			January		
	yes	?	no	yes	?	no
I like school.	74%	26%	0%	55%	45%	0%
Someone at home helps me with my homework.	61%	35%	4%	45%	50%	5%
I watch TV a lot.	74%	22%	0%	41%	50%	9%
I play video games a lot.	30%	48%	22%	41%	50%	9%
My parents tell me when I can watch TV.	30%	26%	43%	27%	45%	27%
My parents want me to do well in school.	96%	4%	0%	100%	0%	0%

Table 6

Class B	August			January		
	yes	?	no	yes	?	no
I like school.	76%	23%	0%	68%	26%	5%
Someone at home helps me with my homework.	45%	28%	27%	32%	53%	16%
I watch TV a lot.	90%	5%	5%	79%	21%	0%
I play video games a lot.	45%	28%	27%	42%	37%	21%
My parents tell me when I can watch TV.	32%	13%	55%	42%	42%	16%
My parents want me to do well in school.	90%	5%	5%	100%	0%	0%

The results of the preceding tables reflect changes from August to January. The changes were positive in some areas and negative in others. The most disappointing statistic was in the homework area. The students perception was that they received less help with their homework as the year progressed. Two areas that indicated positive results were that students watch less TV, and students felt their parents wanted them to do well in school.

The other two questions on the student survey dealt with the students' feelings about the use of their homework bags and how they felt when someone from their family came to school activities with them. Sixty-four percent of Class A liked using their homework bags, while thirty-two percent responded "sometimes", and five percent did not like using them. In Class B 32% liked using their bags, 53% marked "sometimes", and 16% did not like using them. The majority of the students in both classes agreed that they enjoyed having a family member attend school activities with

them. The positive results for Classes A and B are 95% and 74%, respectively. Sixteen percent of Class B responded that they "sometimes" enjoyed having a family member at school activities. A total of 16% from both classes answered in the negative. The negative responses reflect the fact that these students did not have a family member choose to attend the school activities with them.

The "homework connection" sheet (Appendix L) was an integral part of the intervention. Each Monday the students returned the filled out sheet and received a new one for the following week. The following table portrays the records from the 14 weeks this sheet was used (Table 7).

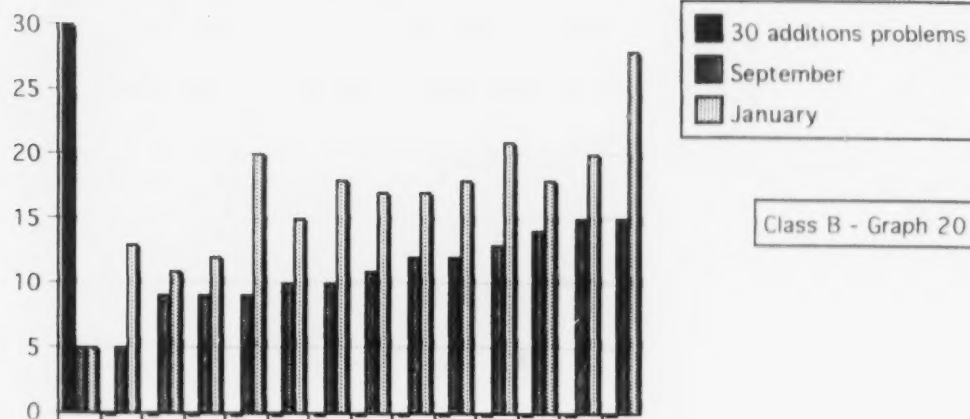
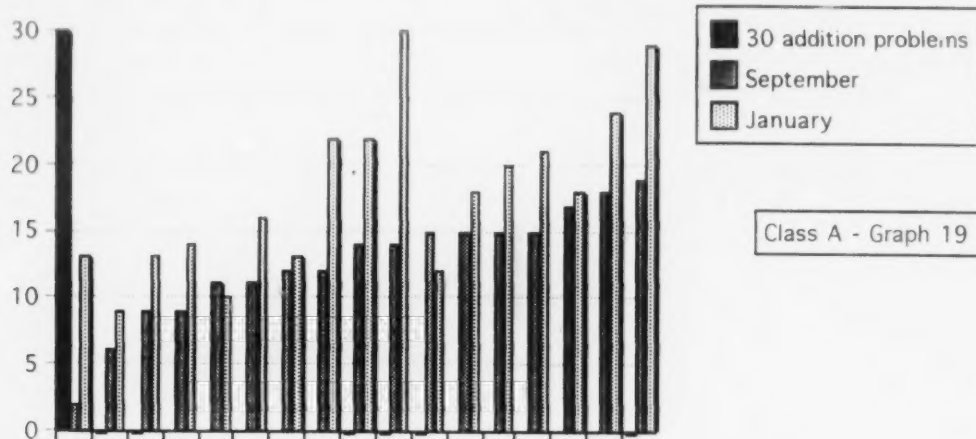
Table 7

Homework Connection Areas	Class A-17 students		Class B-13 students	
	Total Responses out of 1,088	Percent of total	Total Responses out of 832	Percent of total
Signed by parent	770	71%	462	56%
Math facts practiced	233	21%	155	19%
Spelling list practiced	509	47%	231	28%
Other academic activities	357	33%	250	30%

These figures imply that Class A parents were more interested in their child's school responsibilities than Class B. The percentages for practicing math facts were low for both classes. Another observation is that Class A parents spent more time practicing spelling words with their children than Class B. The

final area "other academic activities" included reading books, watching educational television shows, and homework in areas other than math and spelling. The two classes were nearly equal in this area.

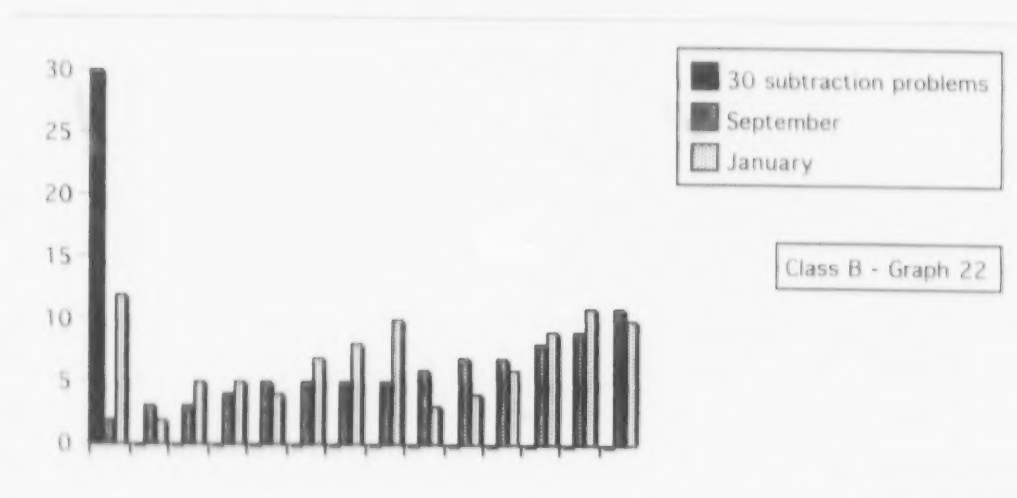
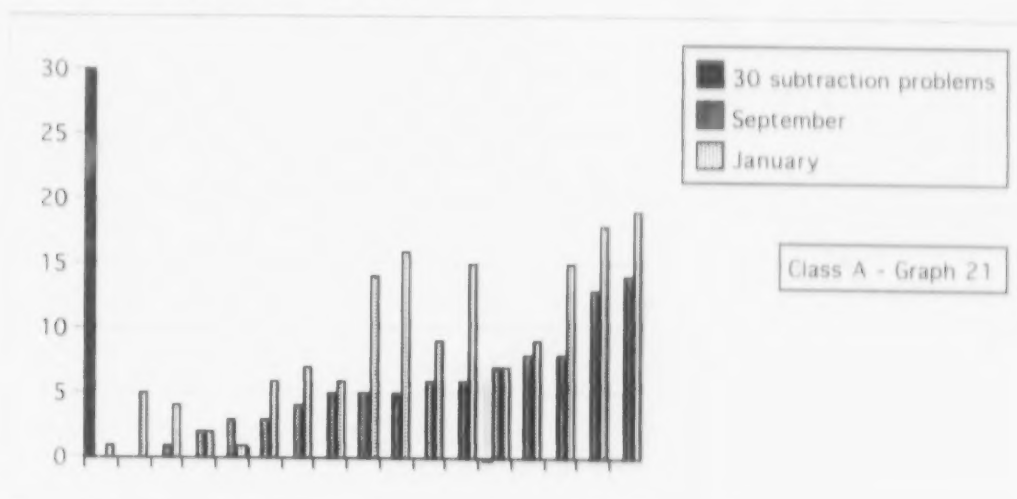
In looking for academic growth posttests were administered to be compared with the pretests. The students' results of the addition pretest and posttest are displayed in the following graphs (Graphs 19 and 20).



Graphs 19 and 20 Pretest/Posttest Addition Mad Minute Results

The majority of students in both classes showed some growth from September to January. Class A had three students who regressed on their scores. Class B had one student who showed no improvement. If optimal practice time had been exercised, which would have been verified on the "homework connection" sheets, these scores should have been much higher.

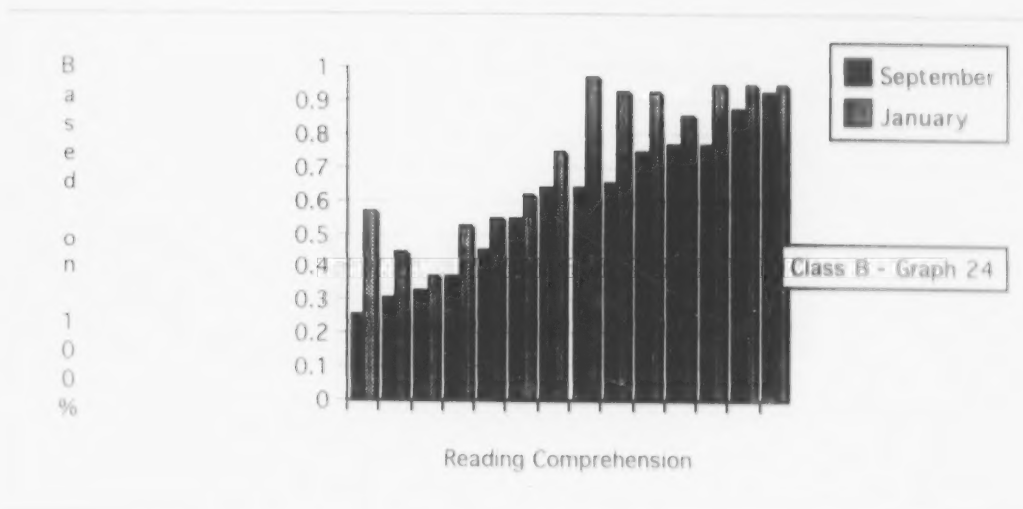
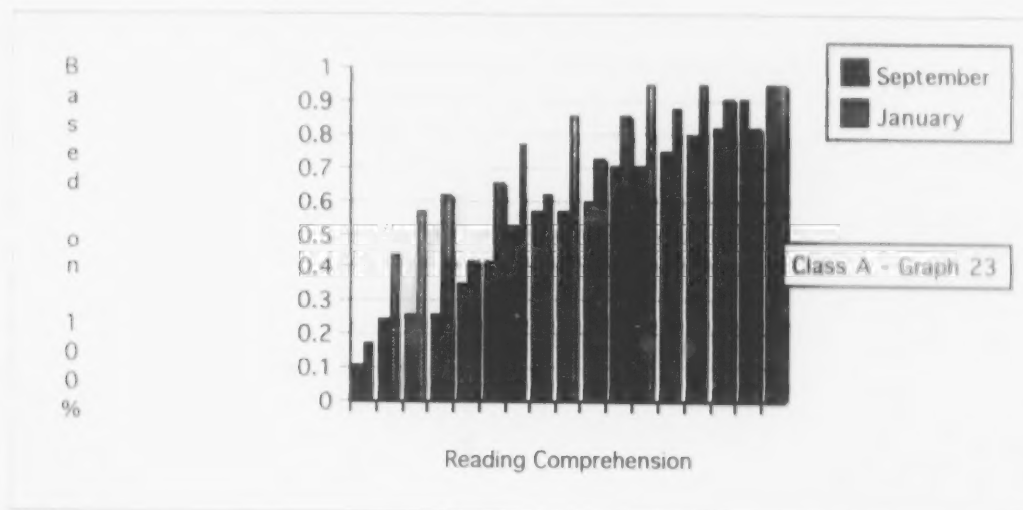
The next comparison is the students' subtraction pretests and posttests (Graphs 21 and 22).



Graphs 21 and 22 Pretest/Posttest Subtraction Mad Minute Results

Class B showed minimal growth and Class A did only slightly better on the subtraction posttest. The results again match the effort put forth at home to memorize the math facts. The addition facts also need to be mastered before students will do well on subtraction facts.

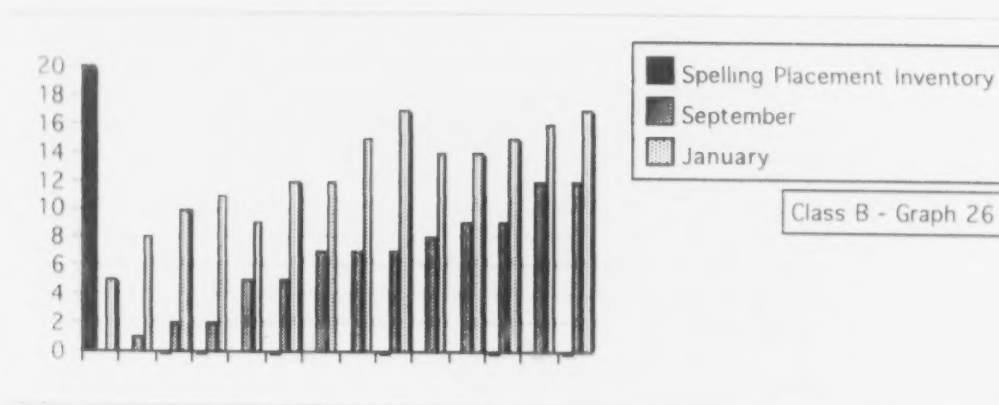
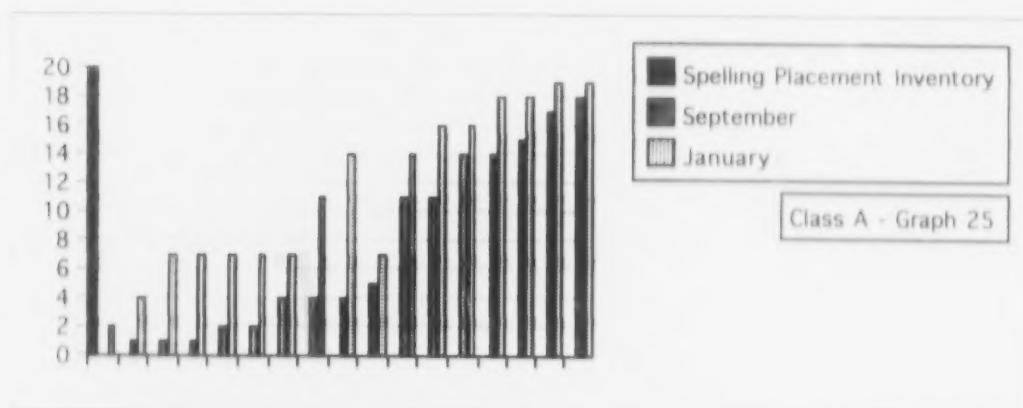
The following graphs demonstrate the results of the reading comprehension pretests and posttests (Graphs 23 and 24).



Graphs 23 and 24 Pretest/Posttest Reading Comprehension Results

Class A results revealed that 88% of the students grew in reading comprehension from September to January. Class B outcomes indicate a 100% growth from September to January. Using 70% as mastery, in September Class A had 7 students at mastery and that figure increased to 10 in January. Class B grew from five in September to eight in January. Some students progressed more due to increased time spent reading at home.

The last academic pretest and posttest to compare students' scores is the 20 word spelling inventory (Graphs 25 and 26).



Graphs 25 and 26 Pretest/Posttest Spelling Placement Inventory Results

Class A and Class B had 100% of the students exhibit growth. In September Class A had five students at mastery and Class B had zero, utilizing 70% as mastery. In January those figures changed to eight and seven, respectively. According to the "homework connection" sheets, parents and students spent more time at home practicing spelling. Even though everyone is not at mastery, all made positive growth.

As reported earlier, Class A had a total of 87% participation, and Class B had a total of 64% at the first parent/child activity times. The parents were asked to evaluate the activities with the following four statements (Appendix M). Ninety-eight percent of Class A and B parents agreed that they had learned new ideas that they could use with their children, the information was well presented, and they would attend another similar workshop. One hundred percent specified that they enjoyed the activities with their child. The parents were given the opportunity to make comments or give suggestions on how to improve the workshop. The following comments attest to the success of the evening:

- * nice job - good ideas
- * the second grade teachers did a very good job presenting information on how we can help our children with their homework
- * liked the way you broke the sessions up - not a lot of people in each group and it gave parents a chance to meet of the teachers
- * liked that each teacher was aware of their time limit for each session and were out at exactly the time the invitation said

- * very informative - great job
- * continue all the hard work - appreciate the efforts
- * the program is great
- * really had a good time - with three children it is hard to spend one-on-one when there is only one parent
- * thank you for making family activity night
- * enjoyed very much
- * well organized
- * it was great - good time for parent and child
- * you all did a super job
- * well done, all
- * enjoyed the evening
- * tonight was wonderful
- * wish more teachers provided fun evenings like this
- * thank you - did a great job
- * thank you for caring so very much
- * thank you all

Suggestions to improve the workshop were as follows:

- * too long - one subject a night or something
- * make sure the school calendar has no other events involving school parents
- * a little more time to work with child would be good
- * fun if parents were put in one group and children in another and have some sort of competition just for fun - the kids always enjoy competing against their parents

The second parent/child activity night that was held in December, included "hands on" experiences in math and on the computers. The invitations to the evening followed the same format as the first activity night although there was only one

time offered. From Class A 86% of the parents answered that they would attend. The actual percent who attended was 72%. Class B had 38% initially sign up to come, but only 23% accompanied their child. Because of a serious illness, the school-parent coordinator was unavailable to call parents who answered "no" or did not respond. These lower percentages were also due to a snowstorm that started about an hour before the scheduled time. According to the figures presented in table seven, there was a substantial difference between Class A and Class B in the use of the "homework connection" sheets. This difference is again apparent in the attendance percentages at the activity night.

A "How Did We Do?" questionnaire (Appendix M) was used as an evaluation tool. The parents were asked "What did you learn?" and to give additional comments or suggestions. The questionnaire was divided into three areas. The comments are as follows:

Manipulatives-

- * had fun making mazes
- * let your imagination run wild and explore
- * non-threatening trial and error
- * various ways to teach all subjects so that it is fun for the students
- * liked geoboards the best
- * these were fun
- * learned about geoboards and attribute blocks
- * makes them use their heads
- * good brain exercises - really stretches the concrete versus abstract
- * loved the geoboards and pattern blocks

Macintosh CD Roms-

- * mom's first try on the computer
- * fun and interesting, great computer experience - think it's a child's favorite activity
- * they all three enjoyed working on computers
- * learning in an environment that students will be expected to use as they get older
- * about the computer - my kid knows more than I do
- * very enjoyable for both of us - great learning tool
- * had a good time - my daughter liked sharing with me what she does at school
- * good night spent learning with my son
- * was pretty fun - kids really enjoyed it
- * always fun learning for adults and kids
- * would like the chance to do this again
- * lots of computer interaction - some are really hard
- * was harder than regular computer

Computer lab - networking programs within the district-

- * enjoyed computer games
- * educational
- * really enjoyed working on the computers with my daughter - my children come home every day they are on the computers and talk and talk about it
- * network activities based on abilities
- * thought the computers were a good thing
- * great learning tool
- * son's understanding of computers surprised me
- * loved it
- * good thinking games

- * good to know about educational programs on computer
- * lots of interactive learning that allows the student to "play" while learning

General comments about the evening-

- * my child really enjoyed presenting the different activities to me
- * good - but kind of hectic this time of year
- * this is an excellent exercise - thanks for your time
- * enjoyed it very much
- * I was surprised and impressed with the abilities of these children - obvious to me that they have excellent instruction at this school

From the above comments those who came found the evening educationally and positively worthwhile.

Seeking the support of the community was another important component to enhance the success of the activity nights. The food service of the school district provided a nutritional snack. Two local banks donated popcorn and pencils. A community minded restaurant contributed the liquid refreshment. A local business supplied the canvas "homework" bags to the effort at cost. The city's daily newspaper provided coverage on the parent nights as well as other intervention activities. The part played by students was two-fold, academic and social. They learned how to properly write a thank you note, and they learned the responsibility of acknowledging with proper etiquette.

The fall parent/teacher conferences had Class A and Class B at 91% and 90% attendance respectively. Class A was able to reschedule the missed conferences, but Class B was unsuccessful in rescheduling attempts. The parents who did not attend or were

difficult to reach were the same ones who did not fill out the "homework connection." The conferences went very smoothly due to having met almost all the parents one or more times before because of the intervention activities.

The last area to address is the reflective journal the students wrote in every morning. Some students enjoyed starting their day sharing what they did the night before, but others found the journaling a tedious task. Because it was difficult to find time to read the journals daily, those who did not like to write had to be prodded to produce since they knew it was not always checked. Periodically, the students shared their writings orally with classmates. This tool did not give the information that was hoped for because students preferred to write about eating supper or what they watched on TV rather than what homework they did.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the presentation and analysis of the data on parent involvement raising academic achievement, the students' scores on the posttest surveys showed a small improvement. A four month intervention period does not allow enough time to break down the barriers to reach all parents. The involvement of parents in a partnership with the school needs to be a long term on-going project. The longer the intervention activities are used, the more academic growth should be seen. Parent involvement needs to be a schoolwide focus that flows from year to year with the optimum goal being positive interaction between school, parents and community with the students being the winners in increased academic achievement.

Even though the academic growth was small, we feel we are on the right track to improving student achievement by increasing

parent involvement. The following areas were affirmative signs to this: positive comments by parents; an enthusiastic attitude displayed by students whose parents signed and returned the "homework connection" sheets; and those who came to the activity nights or participated in some capacity, so their child knew they were interested in and cared about school. During parent/teacher conferences, there seemed to be a trust between the parents and teachers that was missing in previous years. These conferences shed light on why some students were experiencing difficulties socially and academically. Cultivating parents to team up with the school in many volunteer capacities led to a better understanding between them and school. Parents were very willing to cooperate whenever needed. When a problem arose, whether it was academic or social, parents and school worked better together.

Even though the interventions were time consuming, we perceive that next year will be easier to implement due to the fact that detailed records have been kept. These records can be built upon and refined to suit the parents and their needs. Making parent involvement a schoolwide project would also help eliminate the barriers faster. After parents begin to feel comfortable working with the teachers, they will better understand their responsibilities as a partnership with the school.

If we had it to do over again, these are the recommendations we would make:

- * put a name and date line on the "homework connection" sheet
- * add a question about how the parents felt about the "homework connection" sheets on the follow-up parent survey

- * change the way we did the math facts - need to emphasize the importance of home practice
- * better train parents in completing the "homework connection" sheet or revise it
- * decorate a special folder for homework that can go in the student's backpack rather than spend the money on the bags
- * more time spent on instruction with manipulatives at the activity night before turning parents and students loose
- * need to allot time to preview CD's borrowed from other teachers that are used at activity night
- * plan a parent workshop that would share different children's literature - modeling reading and questioning techniques that parents could use at home

Our recommendations are based on notes we took during the intervention period. We were very pleased with this project and did not have any major changes to make. We feel the gains we made in improving communication between home and school were great, and we plan to continue to use the activities incorporated in this project again next year. Our hope is that continued parent involvement will perpetuate increased academic achievement in our classrooms and school.

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Appendices

Appendix A
Pre-Project Parent Survey
Welcome Back Letter

Parent Survey

1. How do you prefer to receive home/school communication?

☐ Newsletter

 ☐ Evening meetings
☐ Phone calls

 ☐ Notes
☐ Other _____

2. Would be interested in being a school volunteer? ☐ yes ☐ no

If yes, check day(s) and times(s) you would be available:
 Mon. Tues. Wed. Thurs. Fri.

9:00-11:00 a.m.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10:00-12:00 noon	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1:00- 3:00 p.m.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

If yes, check how you would like to help in the school:

☐ Assist in the Classroom

 ☐ Computer Assistant
☐ Chaperone Events

 ☐ Help with Parties
☐ Newsletter

 ☐ Other (specify) _____

3. Do you feel there is adequate communication between school and home?

☐ yes

 ☐ no

 ☐ sometimes

4. Do you have a special place for homework to be completed?

☐ yes

 ☐ no

 ☐ sometimes

5. Do you set aside a special time for homework?

☐ yes

 ☐ no

 ☐ sometimes

6. Does your child read for pleasure at home?

☐ yes

 ☐ no

 ☐ sometimes

7. Do you read to your child?

_____ often _____ sometimes _____ rarely

8. Do you set aside some time each day to talk with your child about school?

_____ often _____ sometimes _____ rarely

9. Your child's best work is displayed at home.

_____ often _____ sometimes _____ rarely

10. Do you discuss T.V. programs that you and your child watch?

_____ often _____ sometimes _____ rarely

11. Has your child attended a program or checked out books from the public library?

_____ often _____ not often _____ never

12. Would be interested in attending a parent-child activity evening at school?

_____ yes _____ no _____ maybe

13. Do you have any special talents or hobbies you would like to share with your child's class? _____ yes _____ no

If yes, please specify: _____

Parent's Name: _____

Child's Name: _____

Phone: _____

Best time to contact you is _____

August 20, 1997

Dear Parent or Guardian,

We are looking forward to an exciting year. We are planning many interesting activities with you and your child. In order to best meet the needs of your child, we need your help. Please answer the following questions and help us form a home/school partnership. We would like to have this survey returned with your child on the first day of school, August 27, 1997.

Your child will be doing daily writing and will need a **spiral "wide-lined" notebook** (40 - 70 pages). This is an addition to the second grade supply list. We appreciate your cooperation!

Here's to a Great Year!

Mrs. Blackfelner

Mr. Emery

Mrs. Ranallo



Fall Parent Survey

67

1. How do you prefer to receive home/school communication?

TH IIII IIII TH Newsletter III Evening meetings IIII
TH TH TH Phone calls TH TH Notes TH TH I
I Other Conference I

2. Would be interested in being a school volunteer? yes no

If yes, check day(s) and times(s) you would be available:
Mon. Tues. Wed. Thurs. Fri.

9:00-11:00 a.m. III I I I I
10:00-12:00 noon III I I I I
1:00- 3:00 p.m. IIII II IIII IIII IIII

If yes, check how you would like to help in the school:

II TH TH Assist in the Classroom Computer Assistant
IIII TH TH Chaperone Events TH / Help with Parties TH IIII
I I Newsletter I Other (specify) supply materials

3. Do you feel there is adequate communication between school and home?

yes no sometimes
① TH IIII 63% ② II 13% ③ 25% TH ④ 25%

4. Do you have a special place for homework to be completed?

yes no sometimes
TH TH IIII I IIII

5. Do you set aside a special time for homework?

yes no sometimes
TH TH TH I TH

6. Does your child read for pleasure at home?

yes no sometimes
TH TH II 75% TH TH III 65% TH II 55%

7. Do you read to your child?

often ~~///~~ ~~///~~ ~~///~~ ~~///~~

1 ~~III~~
sometimes

_____rarely

8. Do you set aside some time each day to talk with your child about school? *25%*

often ~~TH~~ ~~TH~~ ~~TH~~ ~~TH~~

1570
sometimes

_____rarely

9. Your child's best work is displayed at home.

_____ often ~~TH~~ ~~TH~~ ~~TH~~ /

1 III
sometimes

 rarely

10. Do you discuss T.V. programs that you and your child watch?

_____ often ~~the~~ ~~the~~ /

174131
sometimes

1570
rarely

11. Has your child attended a program or checked out books from the public library?

often ~~the~~ ~~the~~ /

1 ~~TH~~ //
not often

never

12. Would be interested in attending a parent-child activity evening at school?

yes ~~TH~~ ~~TH~~ 11 60

12

TH 1
maybe

13. Do you have any special talents or hobbies you would like to share with your child's class? yes no

yes

DC

If yes, please specify:

Parent's Name: Volunteer fireman, raising cats and horses
1-Origami, gardening

1-Origami, gardening

Child's Name:

Phone:

Best time to contact you is

Appendix B
Pre-Project Student Survey

WESTVIEW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENT SURVEY (SECOND GRADE)

Student: _____ Date: _____

Cross-out (X) your answer.			
 I like school.			
 I can do my homework by myself.			
 I need help to do my homework.			
 Someone at home helps me with my homework.			
 I watch TV a lot.			
 I play video games a lot.			
 My parents tell me when I can watch TV.			
 My parents want me to do well in school.			

Total

WESTVIEW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENT SURVEY (SECOND GRADE)

Student: Class A Date: Fall

Cross-out (X) your answer.				
I like school.	74% 17	<del> </del> 11 	<del> </del> 6 	0
I can do my homework by myself.	8	<del> </del> 8 	<del> </del> 14 	0
I need help to do my homework.	10	<del> </del> 10 	<del> </del> 7 	6
Someone at home helps me with my homework.	14	<del> </del> 14 	<del> </del> 8 	1
I watch TV a lot.	17	<del> </del> 17 	<del> </del> 5 	0
I play video games a lot.	7	<del> </del> 7 	<del> </del> 11 	5
My parents tell me when I can watch TV.	7	<del> </del> 7 	<del> </del> 6 	10
My parents want me to do well in school.	11	<del> </del> 22 	<del> </del> 1 	0

WESTVIEW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENT SURVEY (SECOND GRADE)

Student: Class BDate: 9-30-77

Cross-out (X) your answer.				
 I like school.	76%	16 	5 	23% 
 I can do my homework by myself.	55%	12 	8 	2 
 I need help to do my homework.		12 	7 	3 
 Someone at home helps me with my homework.		10 	6 	6 
 I watch TV a lot.		20 	1 	1 
 I play video games a lot.		10 	6 	6 
 My parents tell me when I can watch TV.		7 	3 	12 
 My parents want me to do well in school.		20 	1 	1 

Appendix C
Pretests and Posttests

A**3****1***Thirty addition facts***THE MAD MINUTE**

$$\begin{array}{r} 2 \\ +9 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 1 \\ +1 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 4 \\ +8 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 3 \\ +2 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 0 \\ +3 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 3 \\ +3 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 2 \\ +8 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 2 \\ +1 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 4 \\ +2 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 5 \\ +9 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 6 \\ +0 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 6 \\ +9 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 1 \\ +2 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 3 \\ +1 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 3 \\ +9 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 2 \\ +3 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 5 \\ +3 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 4 \\ +1 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 3 \\ +8 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 5 \\ +2 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 1 \\ +8 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 2 \\ +4 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 5 \\ +1 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 4 \\ +9 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 4 \\ +3 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 6 \\ +8 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 2 \\ +2 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 5 \\ +8 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 4 \\ +4 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 6 \\ +2 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

A**6****4***Thirty subtraction facts***THE MAD MINUTE**

$$\begin{array}{r} 15 \\ -6 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 6 \\ -6 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 5 \\ -5 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 11 \\ -8 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 9 \\ -6 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 10 \\ -4 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 8 \\ -2 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 12 \\ -6 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 16 \\ -9 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 8 \\ -6 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 11 \\ -6 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 14 \\ -5 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 3 \\ -2 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 4 \\ -0 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 10 \\ -3 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 6 \\ -4 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 9 \\ -4 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 18 \\ -9 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 7 \\ -6 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 14 \\ -8 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 10 \\ -6 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 12 \\ -7 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 7 \\ -4 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 12 \\ -3 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 13 \\ -6 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 10 \\ -8 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 17 \\ -9 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 8 \\ -4 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 13 \\ -8 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 11 \\ -3 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

75

82

Reading Comprehension: Stories

Sample

2nd

76

What does Sara like to do?

Sara and Father have fun.
They like to play ball. Today
Sara will play with her dog Jojo.
They have fun too.

A Sara likes to —

- ☒ play ball
- ☐ be funny
- ☐ read a book

B What will Sara do today?

- ☐ Play with Jojo
- ☐ Play with Father
- ☐ Go fishing with Mother



Will Jane and Dan get the ball back?

Jane and Dan played with a ball. The ball went up, up, up. Jane jumped to get it. But it came down on top of the house. "What will we do?" asked Jane. "Mom and Dad are not home."

"I know," said Dan. "Why don't we ask Mr. Green to get it down?"

- 9 Who were playing with the ball?
☐ Jane and Mr. Green
☐ Dan and Mom
☐ Jane and Dan
- 10 Who jumped but could not get the ball?
☐ Dad
☐ Jane
☐ Mr. Green
- 11 Jane and Dan's ball came down —
☐ on top of the house
☐ on Dan
☐ by Mr. Green's car

- 12 Why can't Jane and Dan play some more?
☐ Mom and Dad are not home.
☐ They have to go to school.
☐ They have no ball.

- 13 Why can't Dad get the ball now?
☐ He is not at home.
☐ He is in the house.
☐ He is with Mr. Green.



What will Father make?

Father said he would make a little house for Tillie and Tom to play in.

"Oh, good!" Tillie said. "Make it in a tree. It will be fun to look down."

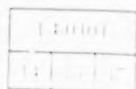
"Make the house down here," said Tom. "Trees are for the birds!"

"It looks like I will have to make two little houses," laughed Father.

- 14 Tillie said she wanted —
- ☐ a house in the tree
 - ☐ two play houses
 - ☐ a house for birds

- 15 Tillie said it would be fun to —
- ☐ make two houses
 - ☐ look down from the house
 - ☐ play with Tom

- 16 Tom did not want the house —
- ☐ by the tree
 - ☐ in the tree
 - ☐ in the grass
- 17 Tom said that trees are for —
- ☐ houses
 - ☐ Tillie
 - ☐ birds
- 18 Why will Father make two houses?
- ☐ So that Tillie and Tom will be happy
 - ☐ So that Tillie's house will be in the grass
 - ☐ So that Tom's house will be in the tree



Did the children want Rex
at the party?

Rex ran after Anne to Jill's birthday party. The children at the party put a funny old hat on Rex. "Now don't bark, Rex," Anne said. Rex ran around and jumped up at Bob. Bob let Rex lick his face. The children petted Rex and gave him food. But they would not give him any birthday cake.

19 How did Rex come to the party?

- ☐ He ran after Anne.
- ☐ Jill called him.
- ☐ He came with Bob.

20 Anne didn't want Rex to —

- ☐ bark
- ☐ eat any food
- ☐ put on a hat

21 Rex did *not* get to —

- ☐ go to the party
- ☐ eat some cake
- ☐ put on a hat

22 Bob let Rex —

- ☐ lick his face
- ☐ have some cake
- ☐ eat his hat

23 In this story, the word bark means —

- ☐ a kind of boat
- ☐ the sound a dog makes
- ☐ the outside of a tree



What did the children see?

The children in Mrs. Brown's class took a bus to the country to see an animal farm. It was something like a zoo. Inside the barn there were cows, horses, and pigs. The children even saw a cat taking care of her kittens.

Outside there were hens everywhere. The hens lived in another little house. A rabbit hopped out of a hole close by. A line of birds, sitting on top of the barn, were making a great noise. And far off on a hill, there were some white sheep feeding on grass.

24 Which animals were in the barn with the cows and horses?

- ☐ The pigs
- ☐ The birds
- ☐ The rabbits

25 Where did the hens live?

- ☐ In the barn
- ☐ In a hole
- ☐ In a little house

26 Which animal came out of a hole?

- ☐ A bird
- ☐ A hen
- ☐ A rabbit

27 What did the children see on top of the barn?

- ☐ Birds
- ☐ Kittens
- ☐ Pigs

28 In this story, the words a great noise mean —

- ☐ the sound a king would make
- ☐ a sad song
- ☐ a lot of sound



1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	0

1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	0



Why couldn't Ricky get to sleep?

Ricky and his friends had walked far into the woods, and everyone was tired and ready for bed. They went to their tents to sleep. Ricky liked hearing the cry of ducks flying over his head, but soon he heard another sound. A brown bear was nosing around outside, looking for food. Everyone jumped up and began to make a big fire. Ricky couldn't sleep much after that. In the morning, they saw that the bear had not found any of their food. The fire had worked.

29 Ricky and his friends were —

- ☐ far into the woods
- ☐ on a lake
- ☐ looking for a bear

30 Walking in the woods had made everyone —

- ☐ tired
- ☐ sad
- ☐ cold

31 One sound Ricky heard was —

- ☐ a friend crying
- ☐ a bear outside
- ☐ the fire they made

32 They made a big fire to —

- ☐ cook the food
- ☐ see the ducks
- ☐ keep the bear away

33 In this story, the word woods means —

- ☐ a place with lots of trees
- ☐ what you use to make a fire
- ☐ what you use to make a house



Did Sam do a good job?

One spring evening Sam's sister was baking a cherry pie for supper. "May I help you?" Sam asked.

"Of course," his sister said. "Wash the cherries that are in that basket. Here's a bowl to put them in."

Sam worked hard and spent a long time washing each cherry very carefully. "Are you doing a good job?" asked his sister.

Sam answered, "Oh, yes, I'm using lots of soap!"

34 Sam asked to help —

- ☐ wash the dishes
- ☐ bake a pie
- ☐ pick some cherries

35 Sam washed the cherries in a —

- ☐ soap dish
- ☐ bowl
- ☐ basket

36 How did Sam clean the cherries?

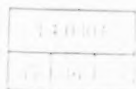
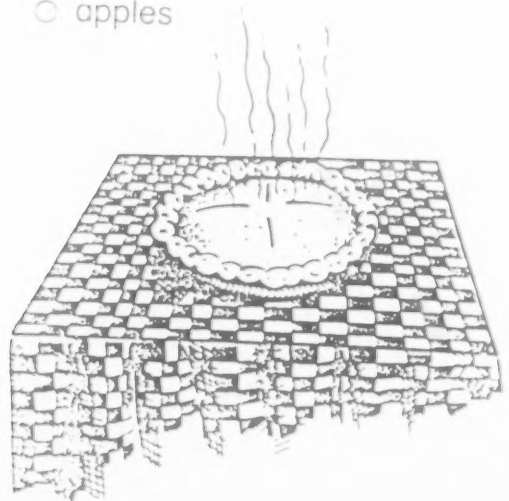
- ☐ One at a time
- ☐ All together
- ☐ A few at a time

37 Sam's sister asked if Sam was —

- ☐ having any trouble
- ☐ having a good time
- ☐ doing a good job

38 Sam's cherry pie would taste like —

- ☐ paste
- ☐ soap
- ☐ apples



VII

Could you make this clown?

Follow these seven steps to draw a clown:

1. For a head, draw an egg standing up on end.
2. Next make a tie by drawing a big number 8 just below the egg, but draw the 8 on its side.
3. Inside the top of your egg, make two big round eyes.
4. Below the eyes, make a "V" for a nose.
5. Below the nose, make a mouth that curls either up or down at the corners.
6. Put ears on your egg and add a silly hat with a huge white feather hanging down.
7. To finish, pencil dots in the tie and color the hat. Be careful not to get color on the feather.

39 The first thing you draw is the clown's —

- ☐ ears
- ☐ head
- ☐ eyes

- 40 When are you told to make the eyes?
- ☐ In the very last step
 - ☐ Right before making the "V"
 - ☐ Right after making the mouth

41 You can draw the clown's mouth —

- ☐ like an 8
- ☐ over the nose
- ☐ curled up or down

42 The ears go on the clown as step —

- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 6

43 The clown's tie is made by drawing —

- ☐ the number 8 on its side
- ☐ an egg standing on end
- ☐ a line that curls up or down



1	4	0	1	0	1
2	1	4	5		

1	4	0	1	0	2
2	1	4	5	1	



Why was Anita worried?

Anita loved playing beneath the curving branches of the willow tree. She imagined she was a well-known singer waiting behind a curtain before appearing. Or, the branches framed a court where she ruled a kingdom as a princess. Sometimes they were the ceiling of her cozy cottage. Often she was an astronaut discovering mysteries on a new planet.

One afternoon, some workers arrived with axes to dig up some of the tree's roots. The roots had crushed a pipe that ran beneath the tree. Anita watched anxiously. "Relax," one worker said. "We won't chop down your tree."

- 44 Anita loved the willow tree because —
- ☐ it was many wonderful things to her
 - ☐ it was old and sick
 - ☐ she climbed it daily
 - ☐ she felt sorry for it

- 84
- 45 The willow's branches curved to make Anita's —

- ☐ bedroom
- ☐ special place
- ☐ yard
- ☐ barn

- 46 What were the workers doing?

- ☐ Chopping down the tree
- ☐ Planting a new tree
- ☐ Playing under the tree
- ☐ Cutting the willow's roots

- 47 Anita was afraid the workers would —

- ☐ discover her kingdom
- ☐ cut down her tree
- ☐ go into the house
- ☐ find the pipe

- 48 The tree might best be called Anita's —

- ☐ work place
- ☐ school room
- ☐ worry room
- ☐ dream world

140101
56

140207
57 41

140301
34 13

What is an Alphorn?

In Switzerland, persons herding cattle use a large horn to call the cows to milking time. The cows search for food on far-off pastures in the Alp mountains. They can hear the Alphorn's blast from far away, echoing among the peaks and cliffs.

The Alphorn is carved from pines still covered with bark. It is from three to twelve feet long. Certain areas in the Alps have their own tunes for the Alphorn. These cheerful tunes have been admired and borrowed by several well-known composers. So today, folk music once played on the Alphorn is heard in concerts far from Switzerland's high pastures.

49 This story says the Alphorn is used to —

- ☐ hike in the mountains
- ☐ milk cows
- ☐ call cows in for milking
- ☐ warn people of danger

50 Why is the Alphorn necessary?

- ☐ The cows are far away.
- ☐ Composers write tunes for them.
- ☐ The Swiss use them for hiking sticks.
- ☐ The cows give more milk to music.

51 The tune played on an Alphorn sounds —

- ☐ sad
- ☐ cheerful
- ☐ like a barking dog
- ☐ like a cow mooing

52 A good name for this story would be —

- ☐ "What Makes an Echo?"
- ☐ "The Cows' Own Music"
- ☐ "Walking in the Mountains"
- ☐ "Switzerland's Pine Trees"

53 In this story, the word bark means —

- ☐ the outside of a tree
- ☐ the sound a dog makes
- ☐ a blast of a horn
- ☐ a kind of boat



Grade 2 Spelling Placement Inventory ⁸⁶

Follow the directions on pages T333-T334 for administering this Placement Inventory.

WORDS	STAGES		
	ON LEVEL <i>Phonetic</i>	BELOW LEVEL <i>Semi-Phonetic</i>	ABOVE LEVEL <i>Transitional</i>
1. side	sid, sod	sd	sied
2. must	moct, most	mt	must*
3. those	thoz, thos	os	thoes
4. glass	gas, glas	gs	glass*
5. stick	stec, ctek	ck	stik
6. light	lit, lot	lt	lite, ligt
7. train	tran, chran	hn	trane
8. don't	dot	dt	dont
9. hard	hrd	hd	hard*
10. deep	dep	dp	deap, depe

continued

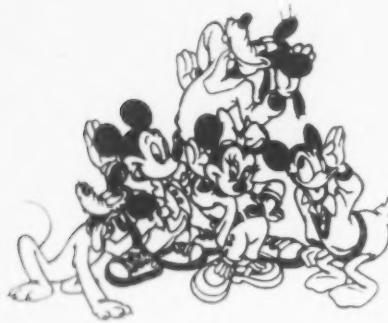
WORDS	STAGES		
	ON LEVEL <i>Phonetic</i>	BELOW LEVEL <i>Semi-Phonetic</i>	ABOVE LEVEL <i>Transitional</i>
11. new	nu	n	noo, noow
12. chest	hact, chast	ht	chest*
13. rock	roc, rik	rk	rock*
14. call	col	kl	coll, caul
15. floor	for, flor	fr	flore
16. couldn't	codent	cdt	coudnt
17. dishes	dechiz	dss	dishis
18. getting	gateng	gtn	geting
19. saved	savd	sd	savved
20. toys	toz, tos	tz	toyes, toies

*A correct spelling. There are few Transitional stage possibilities for this particular word.

Appendix D
Follow-Up Parent Survey
Cover Letter

Follow-up Parent Survey

Name: _____



1. Your child's interest in school has been

_____ more than at the beginning of the school year.

_____ the same as at the beginning of the school year.

_____ less than at the beginning of the school year.

2. Do you feel that the home/school communications have been

_____ too much

_____ enough

_____ not enough

3. If you had the opportunity to volunteer at school, was your experience a good one?

_____ yes

_____ no

_____ other

4. Do you feel your child's homework bag was helpful?

_____ yes

_____ no

_____ sometimes

If yes, what did you like best? _____

If no, how would you improve it? _____

5. Do you feel that your involvement has helped your child grow academically?

_____yes _____no _____sometimes

6. Has the amount of time that your child reads for pleasure increased since the beginning of the school year?

_____yes _____no _____not sure

7. Do you set aside some time each day to talk with your child about school?

_____often _____sometimes _____rarely

8. Did you enjoy attending the parent/child activities at school?

_____yes _____no _____sometimes

Comment and suggestions are welcome _____

**Westview Elementary School**

700 West Old Vine Street Canton, Illinois 61520

309.647.2111 Fax 309.647.2047

Mary C. Kerr Principal

January 16, 1998

Second Grade Teachers

Mrs. Carol Blackfelner

Mr. Mike Emery

Mrs. Barb Ranallo

Dear Parents,

We have reached the mid-point of the year and realize how quickly this school term has passed. Enclosed you will find a "Follow-up Parent Survey" which we would like for you to fill out. This survey will help us determine the success of our parent involvement activities so far this year. Please return this survey with your child by

Thursday, January 22nd

We will be taking tests this week to check math fact memorization. It is very important that you continue to strive for memorization of facts!

Thank you for taking the time to complete and return the survey.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Blackfelner

Mr. Emery

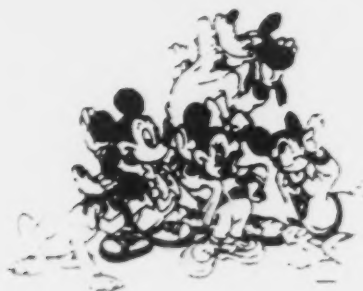
Mrs. Ranallo

The staff of Westview Elementary School believes that education is the foundation of life successes and that all children can learn and be successful. To this end, we are dedicated to provide an atmosphere that supports and encourages students in their pursuit of knowledge. We provide an atmosphere that recognizes the individuality of students as they become life long learners. We believe the partnership of school, home and community is necessary for students to reach their highest potential.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Follow-up Parent Survey

Name: Classes A and B



Class A 1. Your child's interest in school has been

~~///~~ ~~///~~ more than at the beginning of the school year. ~~///~~

~~///~~ ~~///~~ the same as at the beginning of the school year. ~~///~~ ~~///~~

_____ less than at the beginning of the school year. ~~///~~

Class B

2. Do you feel that the home school communications have been

Contr 3 _____ too much ~~///~~ ~~///~~ ~~///~~ enough ~~///~~ ~~///~~ _____ not enough

3. If you had the opportunity to volunteer at school, was your experience a good one?

~~///~~ ~~///~~ yes ~~///~~ _____ no ~~///~~ ~~///~~ other ~~///~~ ~~///~~ ~~///~~

4. Do you feel your child's homework bag was helpful?

60% ~~///~~ ~~///~~ yes ~~///~~ ~~///~~ *59%* _____ no *5%* ~~///~~ ~~///~~ sometimes ~~///~~ ~~///~~ *35%*

If yes, what did you like best? _____

See individual sheets

Class A Black 93
Class B Red

CLASS B Red

.....

table	
-------	--

8970

11 8890

no

11 Mo

// sometimes

1270

Compare to

747.

~~III. III~~
III 812

90

1690

11-2

100

not sure

CO₂

84.9.

82
 77 77
 111

50

164

1870.

III

sometimes

rarely

37990

~~///~~ ~~///~~ /// yes

///

00

2170

/sometimes

240

.....

Appendix E
Student Follow-Up Survey

Follow-up Student Survey

95

Name: _____

1. I like school.



agree



sometimes



disagree

2. I liked using my homework bag.



agree

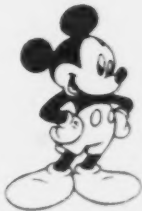


sometimes



disagree

3. Someone at home helps me with my homework.



agree

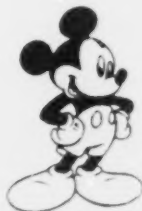


sometimes

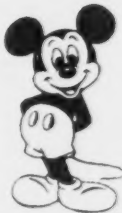


disagree

4. I watch TV a lot.



agree



sometimes

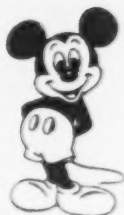


disagree

5. I play video games a lot.



agree



sometimes



disagree

6. My parents tell me when I can watch TV.



agree



sometimes



disagree

7. My parents want me to do well in school.



agree



sometimes

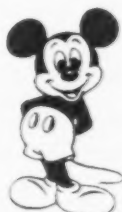


disagree

8. I like when someone in my family comes with me for school activities.



agree



sometimes



disagree

Follow-up Student Survey

97

Name: Results - Class A

1. I like school.

||||| ||

55%



agree

||||| |||



45%

sometimes



disagree

2. I liked using my homework bag.

||||| |||

64%



agree

||||| ||



32%

sometimes



5%

disagree

3. Someone at home helps me with my homework.

||||| |||

45%



agree

||||| |||



50%

sometimes



5%

disagree

4. I watch TV a lot.

||||| |||

41%



agree

||||| |||



50%

sometimes



9%

disagree

5. I play video games a lot.

I didn't
do this
one



agree

|||||



sometimes

|||||



disagree

|||||

6. My parents tell me when I can watch TV.



agree

|||||



sometimes

|||||



disagree

|||||

7. My parents want me to do well in school.



agree

|||||



sometimes



disagree

8. I like when someone in my family comes with me for school activities.



agree

|||||



sometimes



disagree

1

Follow-up Student Survey

Name: Class B

1. I like school.



68%

agree
///

26%

sometimes
///

5%

disagree
/

2. I liked using my homework bag.



32%

agree
///

53%

sometimes
///

16%

disagree
///

3. Someone at home helps me with my homework.



53%

agree
///

32%

sometimes
///

16%

disagree
///

4. I watch TV a lot.



79%

agree
///

21%

sometimes
///

disagree

5. I play video games a lot.



42%

agree

~~///~~ ///


37%

sometimes

~~///~~ //


21%

disagree

~~///~~

6. My parents tell me when I can watch TV.



42%

agree

~~///~~ ///


42%

sometimes

~~///~~ ///


16%

disagree

~~///~~

7. My parents want me to do well in school.



100%

agree

~~///~~ ~~///~~ ~~///~~ ~~///~~


sometimes



disagree

8. I like when someone in my family comes with me for school activities.



74%

agree

~~///~~ ~~///~~ ~~///~~ ~~///~~


16%

sometimes

~~///~~


11%

disagree

~~///~~

Appendix F
Permission Clause

Saint Xavier University
Consent to Participate in a Research Study
"Raising Academic Achievement through Parent Involvement"
Field Based Masters Program

Dear Parents,

We are writing this letter to inform you that we are working on our Master's Degree through St. Xavier University and IRI/Skylight. We will be implementing an action plan including all second graders at Westview. This project will parallel with our regular classroom procedures. The project will be to improve home/school partnerships with the goal of raising students' academic levels. Our results will be reported as part of our Field Based Master's Program. Participation is voluntary in this project. Your child's name will not be used anywhere in the study. If you have no objections, please sign below and return to school by August 27. If you have any questions regarding this project, please feel free to call the school and ask to speak with either of us. We appreciate your cooperation on this project.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Blackfelner

Mrs. Blackfelner

Mrs. Ranallo

Mrs. Ranallo

I give my permission for my child, _____, to be included in the research conducted by his/her teacher for the school year 1997-98. I understand all information gathered during the study will be completely confidential.

Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian

Date

Appendix G
Variety of Homework Activities

Name _____

Practice

c .

C

c

C .

C

C

Cecile

Carla

Chuck

Practice Some More

c

C

Cora checks chicks.

Name _____

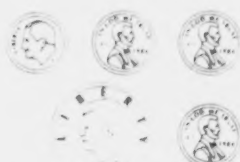
Practice

Student Book pp. 217-218

8-8⁰⁵

Add.

1. 
$$\begin{array}{r} 35¢ \\ + 11¢ \\ \hline 46¢ \end{array}$$

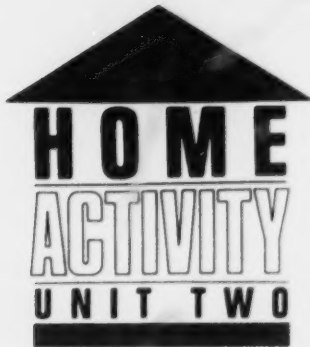
2. 
$$\begin{array}{r} 12¢ \\ + 51¢ \\ \hline \end{array}$$

3.	$\begin{array}{r} 71¢ \\ + 16¢ \\ \hline \end{array}$	$\begin{array}{r} 50¢ \\ + 21¢ \\ \hline \end{array}$	$\begin{array}{r} 45¢ \\ + 49¢ \\ \hline \end{array}$	$\begin{array}{r} 36¢ \\ + 57¢ \\ \hline \end{array}$	$\begin{array}{r} 49¢ \\ + 14¢ \\ \hline \end{array}$	$\begin{array}{r} 32¢ \\ + 36¢ \\ \hline \end{array}$
	¢	¢	¢	¢	¢	¢

4.	$\begin{array}{r} 40¢ \\ + 25¢ \\ \hline \end{array}$	$\begin{array}{r} 13¢ \\ + 66¢ \\ \hline \end{array}$	$\begin{array}{r} 43¢ \\ + 38¢ \\ \hline \end{array}$	$\begin{array}{r} 19¢ \\ + 43¢ \\ \hline \end{array}$	$\begin{array}{r} 35¢ \\ + 27¢ \\ \hline \end{array}$	$\begin{array}{r} 10¢ \\ + 57¢ \\ \hline \end{array}$
	¢	¢	¢	¢	¢	¢

5.	$\begin{array}{r} 32¢ \\ + 35¢ \\ \hline \end{array}$	$\begin{array}{r} 34¢ \\ + 21¢ \\ \hline \end{array}$	$\begin{array}{r} 62¢ \\ + 28¢ \\ \hline \end{array}$	$\begin{array}{r} 59¢ \\ + 13¢ \\ \hline \end{array}$	$\begin{array}{r} 64¢ \\ + 14¢ \\ \hline \end{array}$	$\begin{array}{r} 59¢ \\ + 22¢ \\ \hline \end{array}$
	¢	¢	¢	¢	¢	¢

6.	$\begin{array}{r} 61¢ \\ + 14¢ \\ \hline \end{array}$	$\begin{array}{r} 72¢ \\ + 25¢ \\ \hline \end{array}$	$\begin{array}{r} 35¢ \\ + 12¢ \\ \hline \end{array}$	$\begin{array}{r} 58¢ \\ + 23¢ \\ \hline \end{array}$	$\begin{array}{r} 37¢ \\ + 49¢ \\ \hline \end{array}$	$\begin{array}{r} 24¢ \\ + 53¢ \\ \hline \end{array}$
	¢	¢	¢	¢	¢	¢



HOME

ACTIVITY

UNIT TWO

106

Dear Helper,

For the next few weeks in social studies, we will be studying the ways people in a community can work together. Here are some of the topics we will be talking about:

- some things people can do to work together
- the importance of rules and laws
- how people can work together to solve problems

We are looking forward to an exciting unit and would appreciate your help with the homework assignment below. Thanks very much.

Sincerely,

Homework

Look at the picture on pages 38 and 39 of your social studies book.

1. What building are the cub scouts going to visit?

2. The people in the building are having a meeting. What are they doing in the meeting?

sleeping
writing
voting

3. Laws are rules that everyone in a community must follow. Families have rules too. Write a rule that a family might have.

Here are some books you might enjoy reading together: *Voting and Elections* by Dennis Fradin; *Shiver, Gobble and Snore* by Marie Winn. You may be able to find these books at your neighborhood library.

Grandpa's house is like a big toy chest,
full of the things that I like best!

a frisky puppy

a sleepy kitten

a big piano

a nice, warm bed

a tall brown clock

a story book



And most of all, as you can see,
a rocking chair for Grandpa and me.

_____ house is like a big toy chest,
full of the things that I like best!

And most of all, as you can see,

a _____

for _____ and me.

Appendix H
Sample Homework Hotlines

September 8, 1997

Welcome to Mrs. Ranallo's homework hotline. School got off to a smooth start because all the children had their classroom supplies. This was greatly appreciated and set the tone for a positive year.

Here is a brief overview of what we're working on now.

1. In math we are reviewing basic addition facts. It would be helpful if you would practice these at home.
2. In handwriting we are reviewing the manuscript D' Nealian Alphabet. Watch for handwriting activities to do at home.
3. Science class is starting out with brand new textbooks. Mrs. Blackfelner has introduced a study of rocks.
4. In social studies we are discussing neighborhoods and communities. We are also reviewing the use of maps. Please ask your child what a map key is.
5. Mr. Emery will be instructing the children in writing this year.
6. Next week formal reading instruction will begin. Please read to or with your child on a daily basis, this reinforces what is done at school.

If you have any questions about this message or any other concerns, please call the school or send me a note.

January 08, 1998

You have reached Mrs. Blackfelner's homework hotline for the month of January. Welcome back for a wonderful New Year.

In Math, we are starting Chapter 5 which deals with counting money. It would be a lot of help if you could practice counting money at home with your child. Keep practicing the math facts because we will be retesting math facts at the end of January.

In Science, we have been studying Living and Non-Living things. We also have been studying Animal and Plant groups. Have your child cut pictures ^{from} of magazines of living and non-living things and make a poster for each one.

In Social Studies, the students are learning about their wants and needs. They are also studying about earning, spending, and saving money. They are also learning about goods that are grown or made.

In paragraph writing, the students are learning how to write an eight sentence paragraph. The students are encouraged to include details in their writing. The parts of the paragraph are an introduction, 3 major ideas, 3 minor details about the major ideas, and a conclusion. The students are also learning how to use transition words to make their paragraph flow smoothly.

The character trait for the month of January is honesty. The parent/child activity sheet will be sent home on the 12th and should be returned by the 16th.

In handwriting, we are starting cursive writing. Be looking for cursive homework in your child's bookbag.

In my reading group, we are beginning a Frog & Toad Unit. In this unit, we will learn to spell the seven days of the week and the twelve months of the year. The students will also be learning how to do research.

In Mrs. Ranallo's reading group, the students are at the end of Unit 2 in their anthologies. They are coming upon a Spanish story called ABUELA. After they have read the story, ask your child what Abuela means.

In Mr. Emery's reading group, they have started a story called THE WOLF'S CHICKEN STEW. They are continuing to work on writing complete sentences. The students need to continue to practice the spelling words.

The end of the quarter is January 16th. There is no school on the January 19th. If you have any questions or concerns, please call the school or send me a note.

Appendix I
Invitations to Parent/Child Activity Nights
Reminder Notes to Activity Nights



Second Grade

Parent and Child

Activity Night

Dear Parents,

We would like to cordially invite you to our first "Parent/Child" activity night. You and your child will be working on math fact bags for you and your child to practice on at home. You will also have the opportunity to decorate a canvas bag for toting homework between home and school. We will discuss the D'Nealian style of handwriting, and toss around some ideas and suggestions for studying spelling words.

So that more parents can join us we will be offering the activity night on two different dates and times. Please mark one of the following and return to school by September 19, 1997.

Mrs. Blackfelner

Mr. Emery

Mrs. Ranallo

----- I will attend on Thursday, September 25, 6:00-7:30.

----- I will attend on Tuesday, September 30, 4:00-5:30.

----- I will not be able to attend.

Parent name _____

Student name _____



Westview Elementary School

700 West Old Vine Street, Canton, Illinois 61520

309.647.2111 Fax 309.647.2047

Mary C. Kerr, Principal

September 19, 1997

Second Grade Teachers

Mrs. Carol Blackfelner

Mr. Mike Emery

Mrs. Barb Ranallo

Dear Parents,

This is just a reminder! You have signed up for Thursday, September 25, 1997, 6:00 to 7:30 for our Parent/Child Activity Night! Since this is a special evening for your second grader and you, there will be no babysitting available. Please make arrangements for brothers and sisters.

We are looking forward to seeing you for a fun evening.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Blackfelner

Mr. Emery

Mrs. Ranallo

Mrs. Blackfelner

Mr. Emery

Mr. Ranallo

The staff of Westview Elementary School believes that education is the foundation of life successes and that all children can learn and be successful. To this end, we are dedicated to provide an atmosphere that supports and encourages students in their pursuit of knowledge. We provide an atmosphere that recognizes the individuality of students as they become life long learners. We believe the partnership of school, home and community is necessary for students to reach their highest potential.

September 29, 1997

Dear Parents,

We have several items you need to know before tomorrow. First, we will meet in the cafeteria and begin promptly at 4:00. As you are probably aware, parking is limited at Westview. If you cannot find a parking space on the main lot, use the playground. Our time for each part of the activity afternoon is limited so please discuss with your child how they would like to decorate their "Homework Bags". (no names or words)

See you tomorrow.

Mrs. Blackfelner
Mr. Emery
Mrs. Ranallo



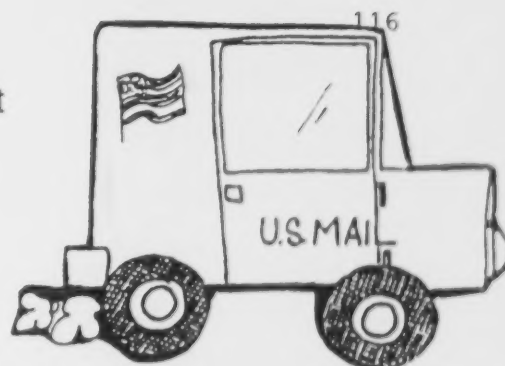
What: Hands on Math and Computer Night

Who: Parents and students

When: Monday, December 8, 1997
6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

Where: Meet in Westview's Cafeteria

Parking: Regular parking lot or playground is available



(RETURN BOTTOM PORTION BY WED., DEC. 3)

_____ My child and I **will** be able to attend.

_____ My child and I **will not** be able to attend.

(parent's signature)

(student's name)

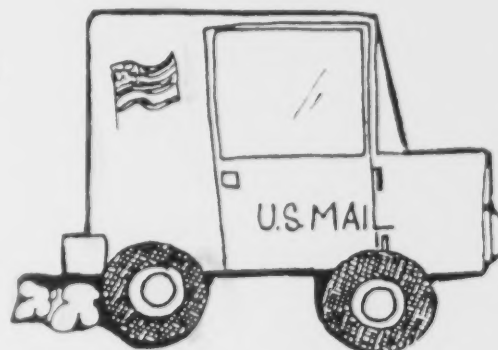
What: Hands on Math and Computer Night

Who: Parents and students

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_____ My child and I **will** be able to attend.

_____ My child and I **will not** be able to attend.

(parent's signature)

(student's name)

Appendix J
Introduction to First Parent/Child Activity Night
Schedule for the Night

We'd like to welcome all of you to our first parent/child activity night. We are very pleased you all came. I'm Mrs. Blackfelner and this is Mr. Emery and Mrs. Ranallo. We all teach second grade and each spend time with your child.

Before we begin the activities, I would like to make a few comments. You were your child's first teacher and continue to be an important teacher. Our goal as your child's teachers this year is for us to be partners with you in ensuring your child has the most successful learning experience possible.

Parents often ask how they can help. To this end, we have put together some ideas that will hopefully be helpful to you. I'm sure you also have ideas of your own which we'd like for you to share.

I'd like to share one idea with all of you before we break up into smaller groups. (Use overhead of homework connection sheet and explain).

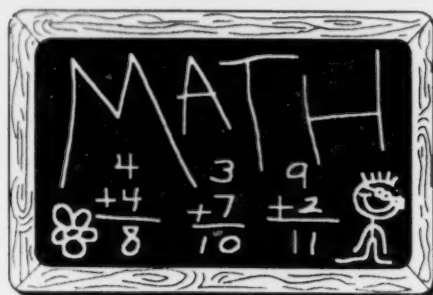
There will be three sessions tonight - designing bags, spelling activities and handwriting and math ideas. Have a great evening! At this time, we'd like everyone who has red to go... etc.

Tentative Schedule for Parent Night

- 6:00 - 6:05 Introduction in Cafeteria
Introduce selves
Introduce Homework Connection Sheet
Discuss rotation
Ask for volunteers to come in and iron bags on Friday
- 6:10 - 6:35 First Session
Red slips - Mrs. Blackfelner *Refreshments
Yellow slips - Mr. Emery
Green slips - Mrs. Ranallo
- 6:35 - 7:00 Second Session
Red slips - Mr. Emery
Yellow slips - Mrs. Ranallo
Green slips - Mrs. Blackfelner *Refreshments
- 7:00 - 7:30 Third Session
Red slips - Mrs. Ranallo
Yellow slips - Mrs. Blackfelner *Refreshments
Green slips - Mr. Emery
**Pass out evaluation and give them a chance to fill it out there or take home
and send back to school.

Appendix K
Samples From Packets for Parent/Child Activity Nights

Handwriting
and math
activities to do
at home



Dear Parents:

The following alphabet is how we present the D'Nealian Manuscript Handwriting program.

Letters are presented in a group of similarly made patterns, starting with Group I. When a child can make 3 of any letter with similar size and shape (although it may not be the perfect finished product), *he or she is at his or her skill level for that lesson*. A suggested audio phraseology of how each letter is formed is also included. The teacher uses voice inflection to help establish rhythm and direction control. A great help is having the child write simple 2-, 3-, or 4-letter words as quickly as new letters are presented; for example, a + d gives *dad* and *add*.

Letters start at the dot.

Group I — Around-Down Letters

	Middle start; around down, close up, down, and a monkey tail.		Start below the middle; curve up, around, down, up, and stop.
	Middle start; around down, touch, up high, down, and a monkey tail.		Middle start; around, down, close up, down under water, and a fishhook.
	Middle start; around, down, and close up.		Start between the middle and bottom; curve up, around, touch, down, up, and stop. Or, curved line up, wrap a c around it.
	Start below the middle; curve up, around, down, and a snake tail.		Middle start; around, down, close up, down under water, and a backwards fishhook.

Group II — Tall Letters

	Top start; slant down, around up, and a tummy.		Top start; slant down, and a monkey tail.
	Top start; slant down, up into a little tummy, and a monkey tail.		Top start; slant down, and a monkey tail. Cross.
	Start below the top; curve up, around, and slant down. Cross.		Top start; slant down, up over the hill, and a monkey tail.

Group III

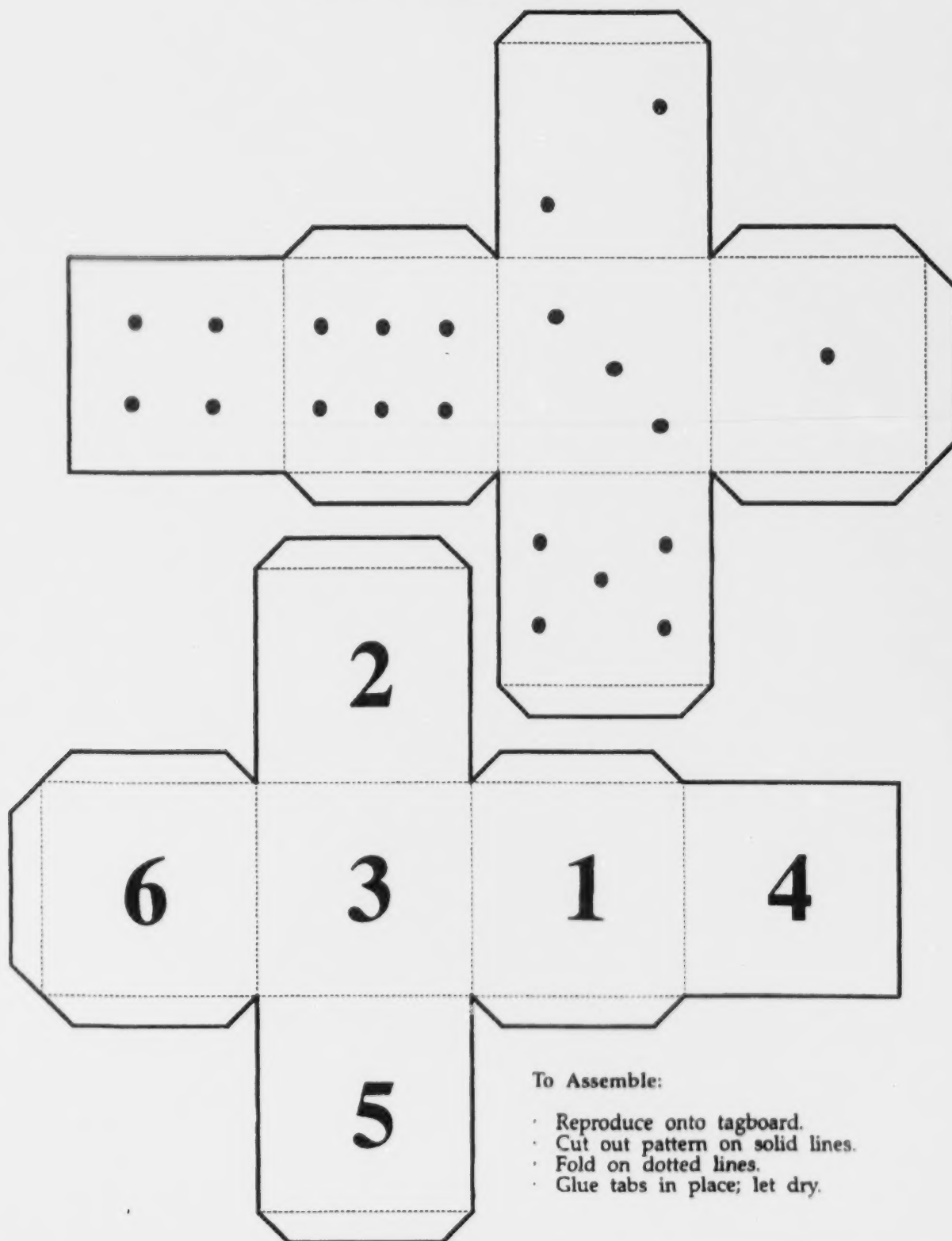
	Middle start; slant down and a monkey tail. Add a dot.		Middle start; slant down, up over the hill, and a monkey tail.
	Middle start; slant down, up over the hill, up over the hill again, and a monkey tail.		Middle start; slant down under water, up, around, and a tummy.
	Middle start; slant down, up, and a roof.		Middle start; slant down under water and a fishhook. Add a dot.
	Middle start; slant down, around, up, down, and a monkey tail.		Middle start; slant down right and slant up right.
	Middle start; slant down, around, up, and down, around, up again.		Middle start; slant down right and a monkey tail. Cross down left.
	Middle start; slant down, around, up, slant down under water, and a fishhook.		Middle start; over right, slant down left, and over right.

FIGURE 18-19 A letter to parents concerning D'Nealian print

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Dice Pattern

123



124

Spelling Units
Spelling Strategies
Spelling Log



STUDENT SURVEY

1. Write them over and over again.
2. Look at the word to see if it looks right.
3. Have a parent give them a practice test.
4. Write their words with their eyes closed.

SPELLING STRATEGIES

Welcome to our classroom!
Let us show you some of
our favorite spelling
strategies!



When I'm
learning to
spell a word, I
use the Study
Steps to Learn
a Word. They're
on pages
8 and 9 of
your book.



Try this tip to
help you spell a word! Say the word.
Then close your eyes and picture the way
it is spelled. Think about whether some
of the letter pairs spell a single sound.



I like to proofread my work twice.
The first time, I circle words I
know are misspelled. Then I go back
and look for words I'm not sure of.



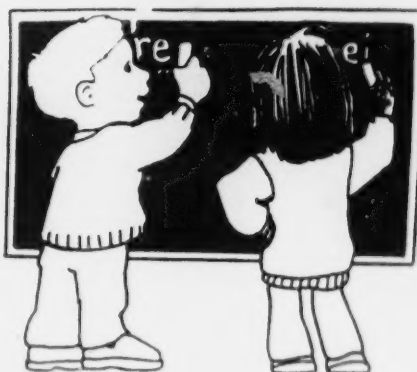
I think of ways to
spell the vowel sound in a word.
Then I try different spellings.

grean?
green?



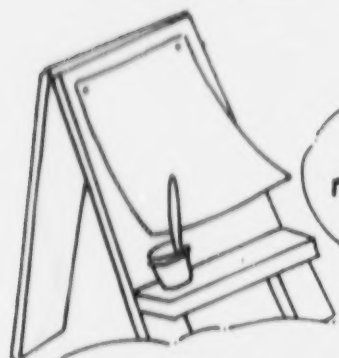
Sometimes I read the words
backward. I start with the last word and end with
the first word.

To help me remember how to spell ready, I remember it has the word read in it.

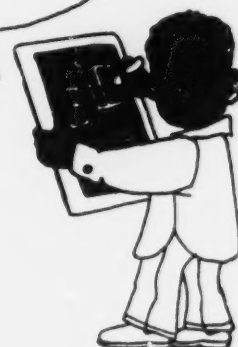


When I need to spell eight, I think of this silly sentence: Even Irving's geese honk today. Put together the first letter of each, and you have eight!

Drawing the shape of a word helps me remember how to spell it. This is the shape of the word park.



When I don't know how to spell a word, sometimes I think of a word that rhymes with it. Both words may have the same spelling pattern.



We are proofreading partners! She reads the words aloud while I look at the spelling. Then we trade jobs.



If you don't know how to spell a word, you might just take a guess! Then you can check the dictionary to see if you were right!



Sometimes I look up a word in the dictionary. Sometimes I just ask someone how to spell it.

WORDS TO STUDY



The Words to Study pages have a box for each unit in your spelling book. In each box, write the words from that unit that you need to work on more.

Be sure to list the words you missed on the pretests. Put in other words from the unit that you are not sure you can spell correctly.



I'm going to use the study steps on pages 8 and 9 to help me learn these words!

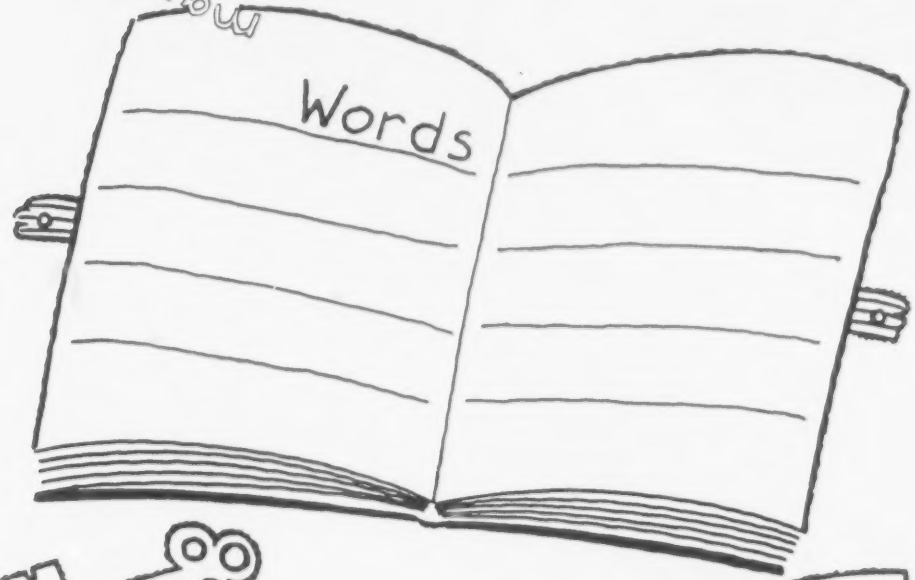




MY OWN WORD COLLECTION

I'm writing my favorite new word!

How many words



LOGO





Spelling Activities

That You Can Do At Home

Here are some fun, easy ways to get your child to want to practice their spelling words.

Word Hunt

Write the week's words on sticky notes and stick them on a table, floor, refrigerator, wall, etc... Ask your child to find each word after you read it to them. Example: I would say the word bit and ask the child to pick up the sticky note with the word bit written on it.

Magnetic Letters

These can be purchased at a low cost from Walmart, KMart, and the many grocery stores in town. Magnetic letters work well because it allows the students to manipulate the letters into the words in a way other than writing them.

Yarn Writing

Cut strips of different colored yarn at various lengths. You might want some strips as long as five inches long and others as short as two inches. Have your child practice forming the yarn into letters to make the week's spelling words.

Backwards Spelling Test

Give your child an oral practice test by spelling the word for them and letting them answer you by saying what word the letters spell. Example: I would say "b,i,t" and the child would say "bit."

Name _____

Skill Spelling practice



Let's Spell



Copy the word.	Say it aloud. ✓	Spell it aloud. ✓	Close eyes. Spell it. ✓	Fold the paper. Write the word.
1. _____				1. _____
2. _____				2. _____
3. _____				3. _____
4. _____				4. _____
5. _____				5. _____
6. _____				6. _____
7. _____				7. _____
8. _____				8. _____
9. _____				9. _____
10. _____				10. _____

Brainwork! Put a star next to all the words you spelled correctly in the left-hand column. Then circle all the ones left. The circled words are

SHAKE AND MAKE

Purpose:

Making words from letters

Preparation:

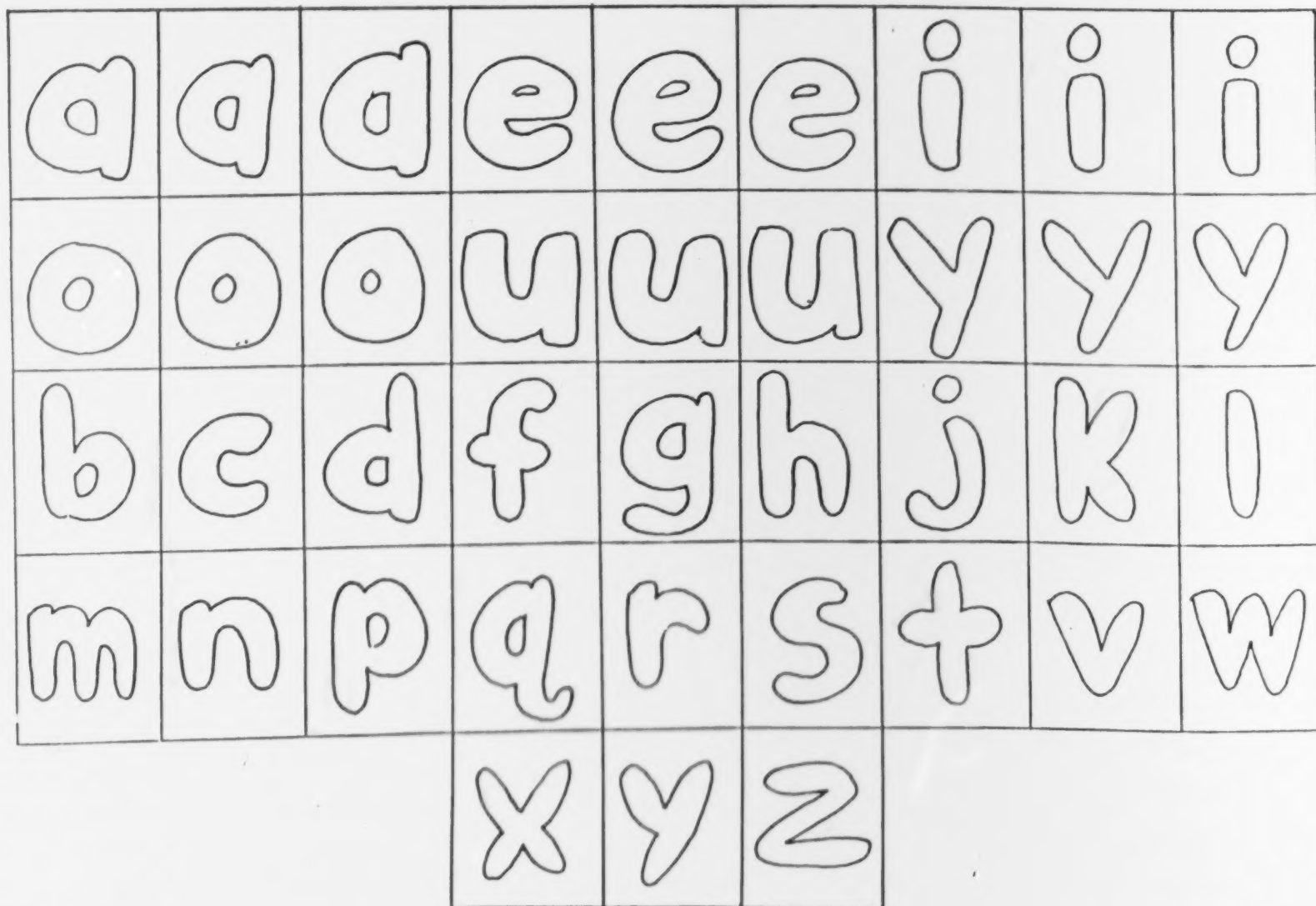
1. Provide two jars, kitchen timer, scissors, paste and construction paper.
2. Reproduce the letters on the following page for each player.

Procedure:

1. This game is for two players.
2. Each player pastes one set of letters on a piece of construction paper and cuts out the letters. One set of letters is then placed in each jar.
3. The kitchen timer is set for three minutes.
4. The players shake the jars and spill out the letters.
5. Each player then tries to make as many words as possible within the three minute period.
6. Three-letter words count three points, four-letter words count four points and five-letter words count five points.
7. The remaining letters are placed in the jars and the game continues until one player has 20 points to win the game.

Variation:

This game can be played with the entire class. Each player has a set of cut-out letters. At a given signal, the players try to make as many words as possible. At the end of a three minute period, the players count their words. The player who has the most words wins the game.





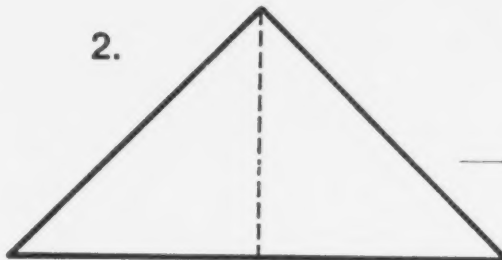
How many small ▲ pieces will cover each shape?
Trace, and write the number.

1.

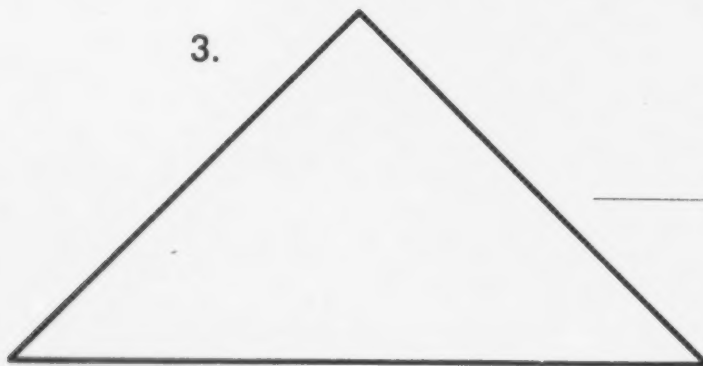


1

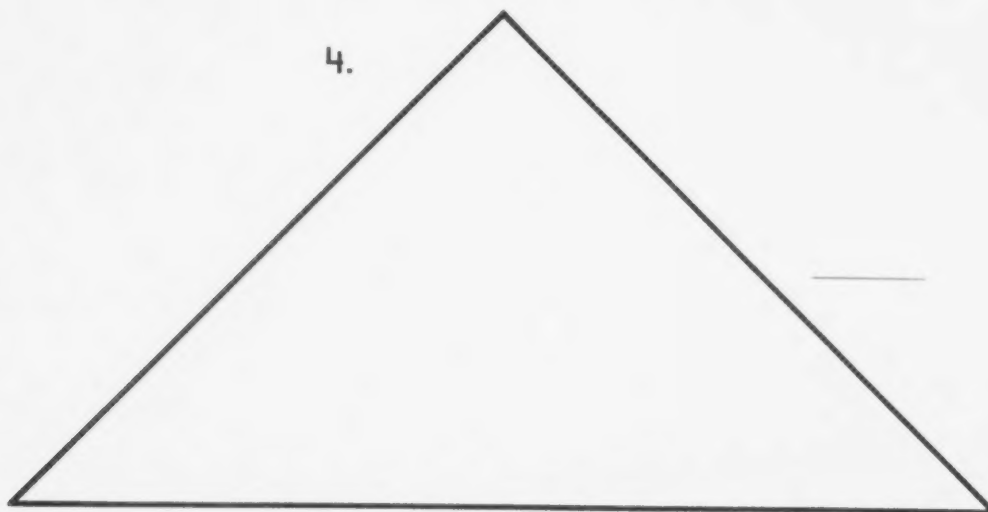
2.



3.

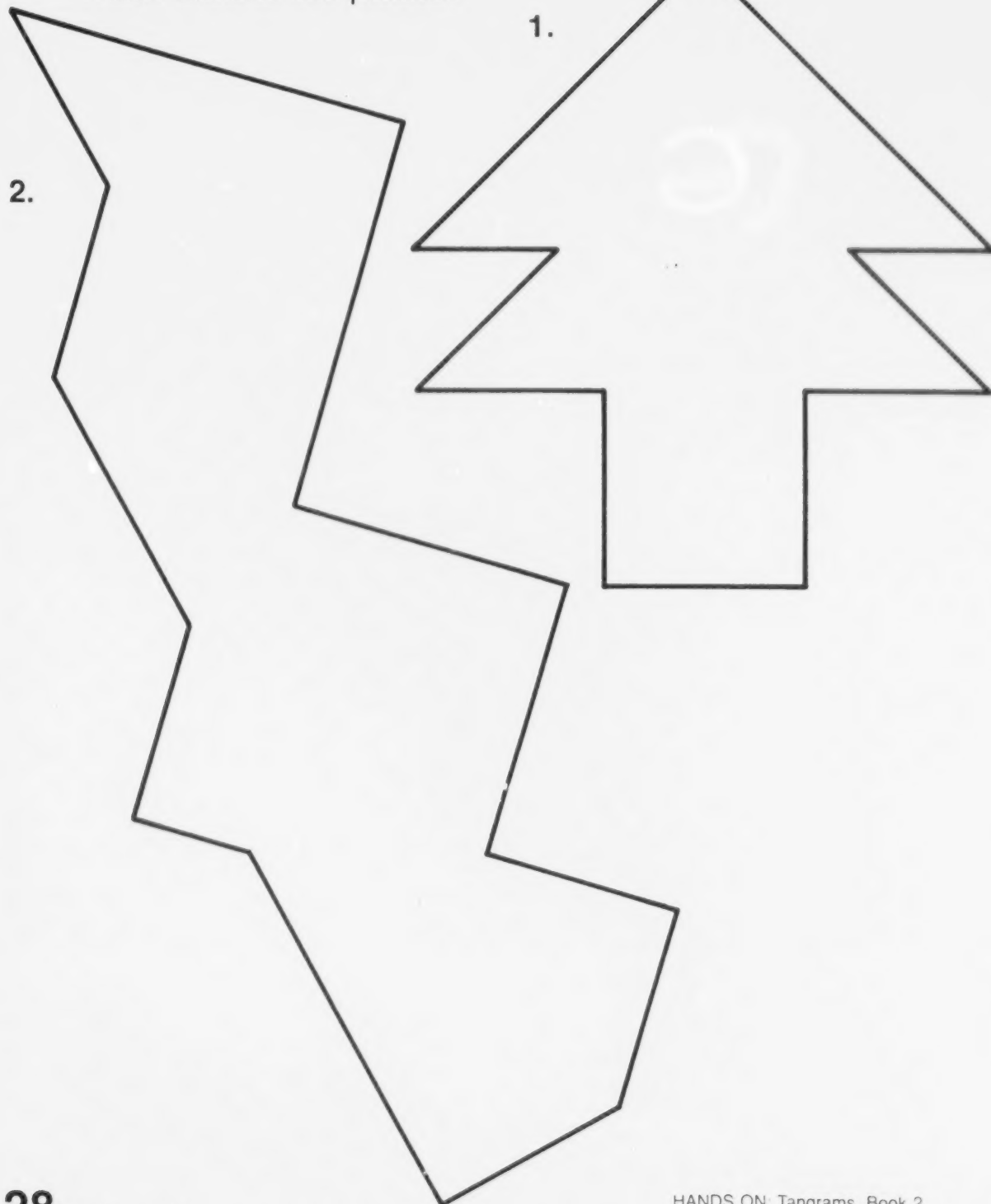


4.





Cover each shape with pieces.
Trace around the pieces.



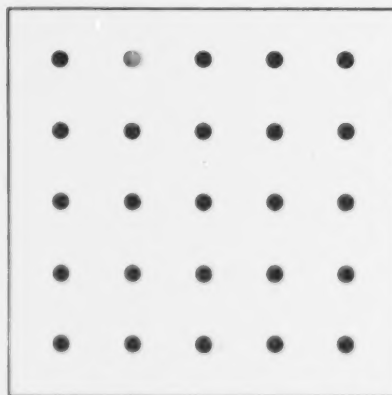
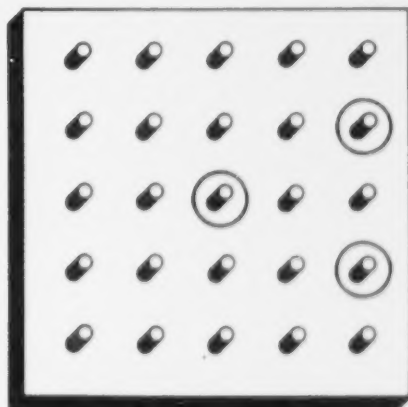


Find these pins on
your geoboard.

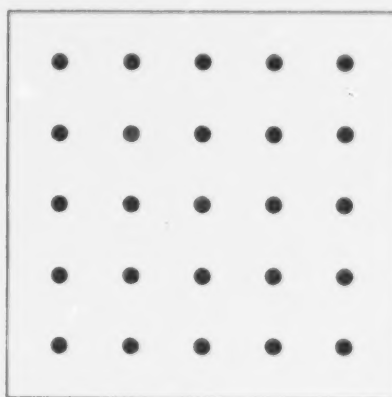
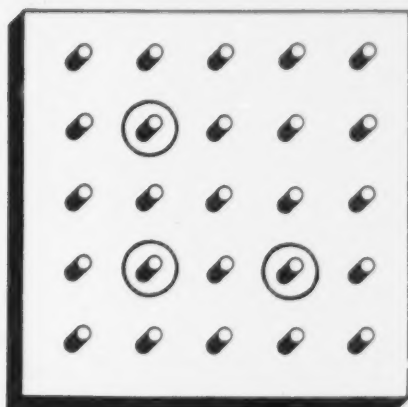
Connect them with a
geoband.

Copy the shape.

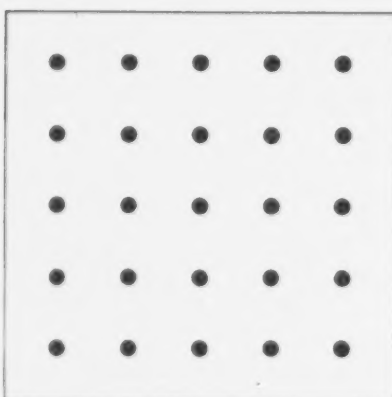
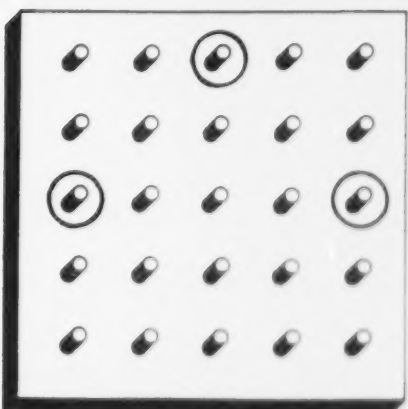
1.



2.



3.





Use 1 geoband.

Make shape A on the geoboard. Count the corners and the pins touched. Write the numbers.

Change shape A to shape B. Count the corners and the pins touched. Write the numbers.

1.

A

____ corners

____ pins touched

→

B

____ corners

____ pins touched

2.

A

____ corners

____ pins touched

→

B

____ corners

____ pins touched



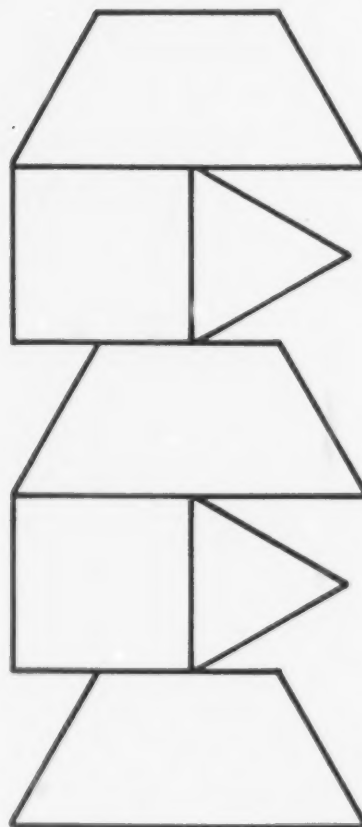
Cover. Look for the pattern.

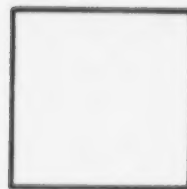
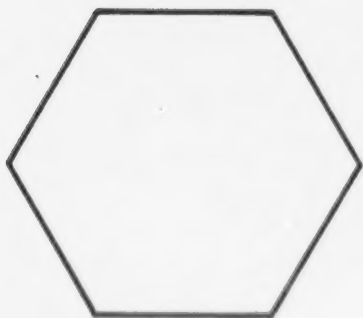
Add the blocks that come next. Trace to record.

1.



2.





yellow



red



blue



orange



green



tan



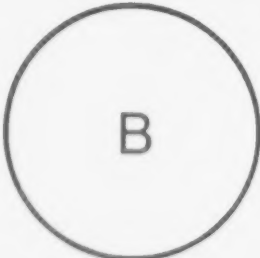
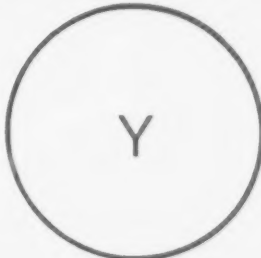
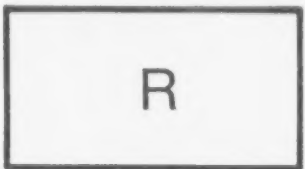
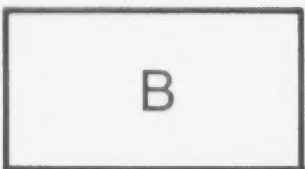
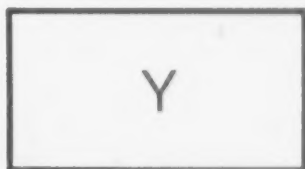
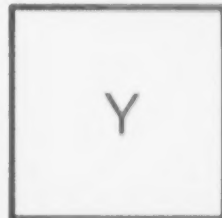
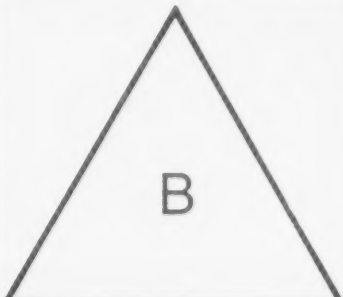


Cover the shapes with all the thin (—) blocks.

R is for red

B is for blue

Y is for yellow



NAME _____

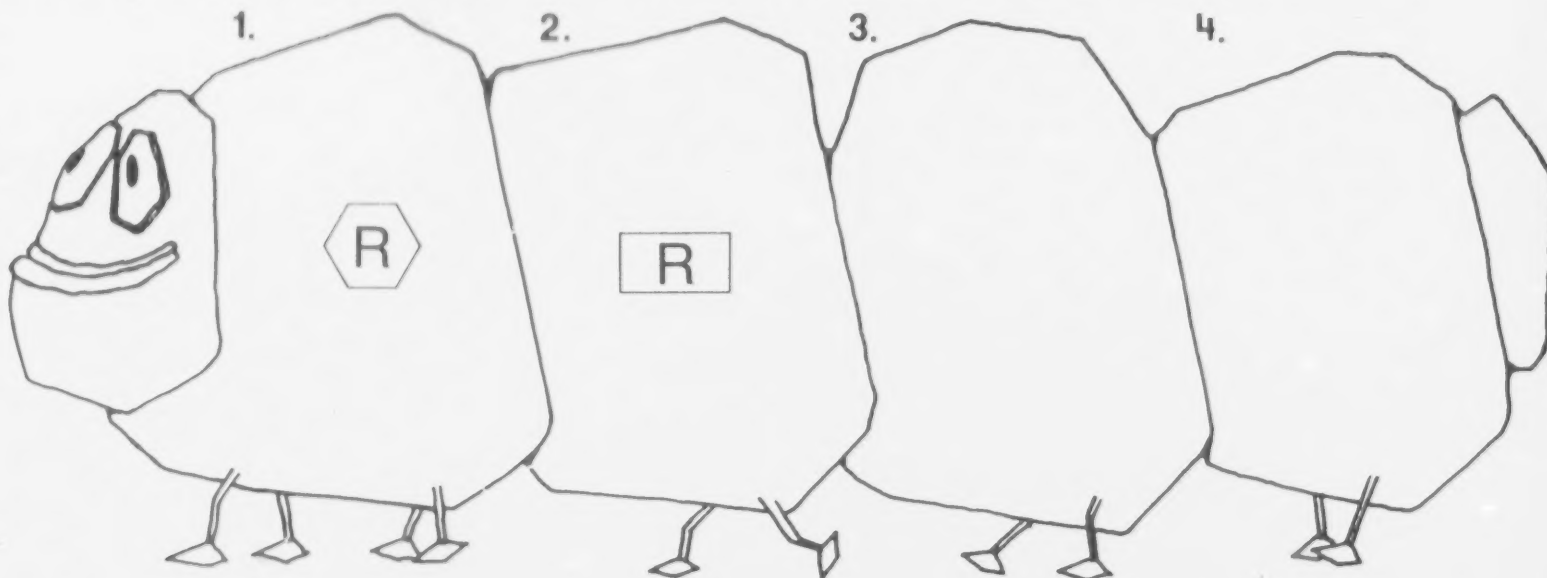
Find a block for each part of the bug. Every block should be different in 1 way from the block next to it. Do it in 2 different ways. Trace and color.

1.

2.

3.

4.

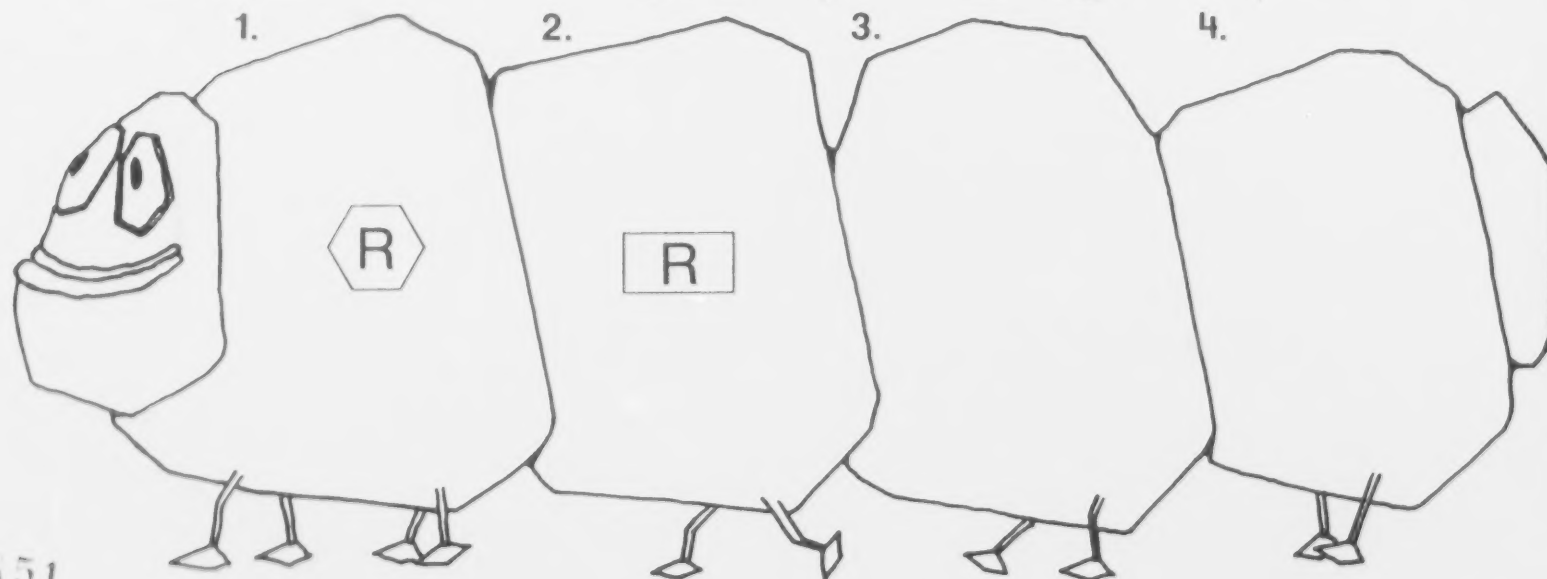


1.

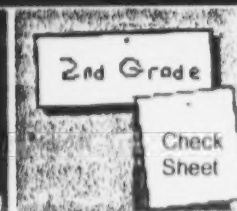
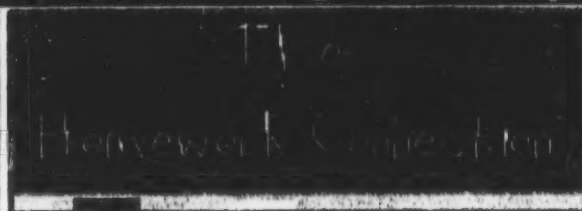
2.

3.

4.



Appendix L
Homework Connection Sheet
Homework Connection Record Sheet



Please use the following daily form to check off your child's assignments. Math facts should be practiced twice weekly. Spelling words need to be studied until mastery. If you find a homework activity in the bag (reading, social studies, handwriting or other), please make sure your child completes it that night. There will not always be a homework assignment, but you need to sign off on this sheet so we know your child shared with you.

Monday

- ☐ Math Facts
☐ Spelling
☐ Other

Helper's Signature

Tuesday

- ☐ Math Facts
☐ Spelling
☐ Other

Helper's Signature

Wednesday

- ☐ Math Facts
☐ Spelling
☐ Other

Helper's Signature

Thursday

- ☐ Math Facts
☐ Spelling
☐ Other

Helper's Signature

Friday

- ☐ Math Facts
☐ Spelling
☐ Other

Helper's Signature

Student's name _____

Date	Oct 2-3	Oct 6-10	Oct 13-17	Oct 20-24	Oct 27-31	Nov 3-6	Nov 10-14
Signed							
Math							
Spelling							
Other							
Date	Nov 17-21	Nov 24-26	Dec 1-5	Dec 8-12	Dec 15-19	Jan 5-9	Jan 12-16
Signed							
Math							
Spelling							
Other							

Notes

Student's name _____

45

Date	Oct. 2-3	Oct. 6-10	Oct. 13-17	Oct. 20-24	Oct. 27-31	Nov. 3-6	Nov. 10-14
Signed	2	4	5	5	2 <i>Lilly was sick</i>	2	5
Math	0	3	2	5		1	3
Spelling	2	3	4	4	2	2	5
Other	0	1	0	2	1		2
Date	Nov. 17-21	Nov. 24-26	Dec. 1-5	Dec. 8-12	Dec. 15-19	Jan. 5-9	Jan. 12-16
Signed		4		4		5	5
Math		1		0		1	1
Spelling		3		4		5	5
Other		2		1		0	1

Notes:

Appendix M
Evaluations for Parent/Child Activity Nights

Evaluation

Please mark those statements which you find to be true.

I learned new ideas tonight that I can use with my child. _____

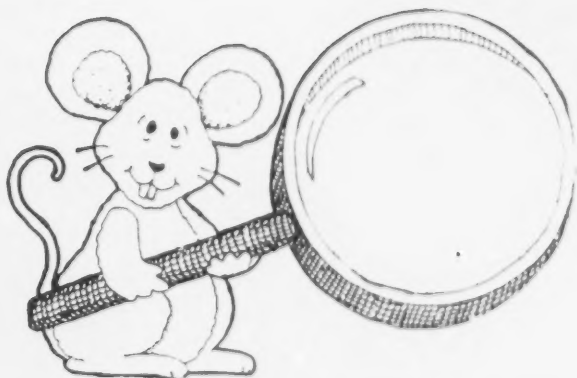
The information was well presented. _____

I would attend another similar workshop. _____

My child and I enjoyed the activities. _____

Please feel free to make comments or give suggestions on how this workshop may be improved:

Thank you for your participation!



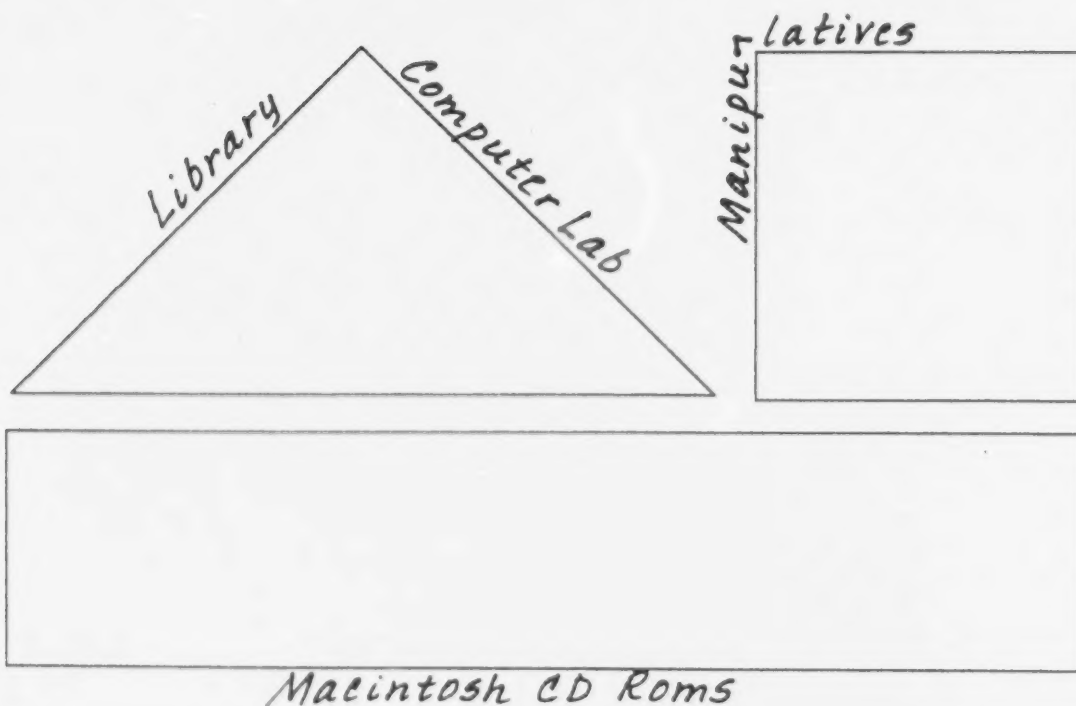
How Did We Do?

Please comment in the shapes:

What did you learn?

Circle your favorite activity.

Any suggestions?



Appendix N
Social Skills Checklist

Social Skills Checklist

Directions: Please rate your child on each of these social skills. Mark under the appropriate column with an X.

Student: _____ **Date:** _____

Signature: _____

	Frequently	Sometimes	Not Yet
Uses good manners	_____	_____	_____
Takes turns	_____	_____	_____
Shares	_____	_____	_____
Good listener	_____	_____	_____
Plays well with others	_____	_____	_____



Please return to school by Sept. 12, 1997.

Appendix O
Sample Cooperative Lesson

Social Skills on Respect

Objectives: Respectful Rabbit will help children:

1. Understand that respect means treating others as you would like to be treated.
2. Learn that good manners are a way to show respect.
3. Recognize behavior as respectful or disrespectful.

Day 1

Read to class: Bein' With You This Way by W. Nikola-Lisa. Read twice - first time with students just listening. The second time have students sing along.

After reading, discuss how they are different from each other, yet the same - like the children in the story.

Do whole class activity - "Find a Friend on a Rainy Day" to show some of our differences from each other.

Day 2

Introduce lesson with the "Would You Like It?" activity from page 12. Choose 3 or 4 situations to discuss about how the circumstances would make them feel.

Talk about Respectful Rabbit's rule: "Treat others as you would like to be treated."

Divide class into cooperative learning groups to do page 14 - "What Would She Do?"

Jobs:

Reader
Recorder
Reporter
Time keeper

Give students 15 minutes to discuss and do page 14. Tally responses for each item. Read page 16 and students can color.

Day 3

Read - But Names will Never Hurt Me by Bernard Waber. Discuss the story.

Divide into cooperative learning groups to do discussion cards.

Jobs:

Reader

Reporter

Encourager

Materials Manager

Do one card at a time. Allow 4 minutes. Then the reporter for each group will present the group's solution. There are 4 discussion cards. They can do 2-4.

Day 4

Choose 1 manners book to read to the class.

Choices:

Max and the Magic Word by Colin and Jacqui Hawkins

I Want My Dinner by Tony Ross

The Berenstain Bears Forget Their Manners by Stan and Jan Berenstain

Rude Giants by Audrey Wood

Do - "Manners Matter," page 15 and talk about students' choices.

Discuss with students about "A Matter of Manners."

*Make poster board - "Manners Matter Teams"

Respect

155

The foundation of respect is worth. Anything of value deserves a measure of respect. Foremost we must respect other people—their feelings, their beliefs, and their cultures. We must also respect other living things, including plants and animals, and the environment and natural resources that enable us to exist—the earth, the air, and the water. But respect extends much further. We respect others' physical space, property, and rights. We respect others' achievements, authority, and wisdom. And, we respect our country and the various social organizations to which we belong.

In this unit, Respectful Rabbit will help you help your children

- understand that respect means treating others as you would like to be treated.
- learn that good manners are a way to show respect.
- recognize behavior as respectful or disrespectful.



Group Workout

Different Yet the Same

Ask your librarian for a copy of W. Nikola-Lisa's book *Bein' With You This Way*. This beautifully illustrated book celebrates cultural diversity through the story of a group of children at play who discover that although they all look different, they are really just the same. The text has a rhythm that flows like a song punctuated with repeating refrains like "Ah-ha" and "Oh yeah!" Read the story twice and your students are likely to "sing" along. Follow up with a discussion of how, like the children in the story, they are different yet the same.

Bein' With You This Way by W. Nikola-Lisa (Lee & Low, 1994)

From a child's-eye view, discovering physical differences only adds to the joy of playing and being together.

Name _____

I am
respectful.

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Manners Matter

Directions: Respectful Rabbit knows the importance of good manners. Write what she would say in each situation.

- Please • Thank you • Excuse me • I'm sorry



Respectful Rabbit got a gift from Grandma.



Respectful Rabbit wanted another fresh juicy carrot.



Respectful Rabbit sneezed very loudly.



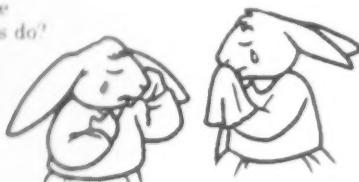
Respectful Rabbit accidentally stepped on her brother's paw.

Discussion Cards—*Respect*

Because It's Fun

Goofy Gopher thinks it's fun to pick on bunnies. Sometimes he chases them into their holes. Sometimes he calls them "Big Ears." When they start to cry, he just laughs and scampers away.

What can the little bunnies do?



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Someone Else Will Do It

You can always tell when Messy Mouse has been eating. There are paper wrappers and chewed up bits of food wherever she's been. Messy Mouse thinks someone else will clean up after her. The other mice are tired of cleaning up after Messy Mouse so they can have a nice place to eat.

What can the other mice do?



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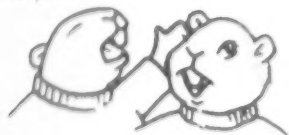
IF5150 Character Education Gr. K-2

Discussion Cards—*Respect* continued

Who Cares?

Mother Squirrel was not feeling well. She decided to lie down and rest for a while. Squeaky Squirrel and Whiney Squirrel began to run around making all kinds of racket. Squeaky started to scream when he lost the game. Whiney Squirrel woke Mother Squirrel up to ask her to make her a walnut pie.

What can Mrs. Squirrel do?



You Took It

Blaming Bear started the day with three new pencils. At the end of the day, she only had two. "Someone stole my pencil," she thought. "Jerry Bear has a pencil. It's probably mine." So she grabbed the pencil out of Jerry Bear's hand. "You took my pencil!" Blaming Bear shouted at Jerry Bear.

What can Jerry Bear do?



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Appendix P
Sample Newsletter

Westview 2nd Grade News!

TEACHERS: Mrs. Blackfelner, Mr. Emery, and Mrs. Ranallo
Westview School, 647-2111
October 13, 1997

SPECIAL EVENTS-

We enjoyed meeting you at our Parent/Child Activity Night. The children were very excited to work with their parents. We hope the shared ideas have been helpful.

Since you cut out Math Facts at our Parent/Child night and are practicing twice a week, we will be giving timed math progress checks. These checks are called "Mad Minute" tests. The children have 30 subtraction or addition facts to do in one minute. With the home practice, the students should see great improvement.

The "Homework" bags are adorable! The children are very proud of them. The bags need to be carried daily with the signed "Homework Connection" sheet kept in the bag. The sheets will be collected and recorded on Mondays and Wednesdays. Each Monday a new sheet will be placed in the bag. Please remember that these bags are our connection with you!

The rock trip was a great success! The students really enjoyed being able to search for their own rocks. The students found some neat rock samples!

REMINDERS-

We are collecting soup labels and box tops at school. If you have any, be sure to send them with your child!

If you **must** wash your child's "Homework" bag, use cold water and line dry.

It is time for the Book-It Program to start. Our reading goal is 12 books a month. Remember to fill in the book-it sheet by writing your child's name, your name, the name of the book, author, and date.

GOOD NEWS-

Congratulations!
The children have been doing well on their spelling tests.
Home and school working together spells
SUCCESS!!



UPCOMING EVENTS-

The week of Oct. 21-24, all 2nd graders will be taking the Stanford Achievement Test. Tips: good night's sleep before testing day, two No. 2 pencils, and a healthy snack for our break time.

The following week, on the mornings of Oct. 28 and 29, all 2nd graders will be taking the Otis-Lennon School Ability Test. These will be very short sessions so no snack will be needed, but the students will need a good night's sleep before the test and two No. 2 pencils.

SPECIAL INFORMATION-

The students and the teachers have made a list we call "Our Basic Responsibilities". As part of our continuing effort to communicate and work with the parents of our students, we wanted to let you know what these responsibilities are.

1. Follow directions the first time given.
2. Raise your hand before speaking and wait to be called upon.
3. Keep hands, feet and objects to yourself.
4. Stay in your seat during class time.
5. Work quietly.
6. Walk in our classroom and the

building.

Consequences are-

1. Move 1 token. No action taken.
2. Loss of a second token and approximately 5 minutes time out to think about what "I" did.
3. Loss of third token. An approximate 15 minutes time out. Draw or write what "I" did and what "I" should have done. Parents will be notified. (The notification will usually be the paper the child has filled out, which the parents sign and return to school. See attached sample sheet.)
4. All of the above, plus child may be removed from the classroom for the time out. She/ he may be sent to the principal's office.
5. Severe Clause: Sometimes a child will do something that requires more serious attention than usual. In these events, the child is taken to the office.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact us at school.

S.T.A.R. PLaN
(Success Through Acting Responsibility)

Name _____ Date _____

My behavior (What am **I** doing?)

My plan (I will...)

Teacher signature

Parent signature